Folk Dance of

Maharasht

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# CONTENTS

## System of Transliteration



| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| अ – a. | आ – ā. | इ – i. | ई – ī. |
| उ – u. | ऊ – ū. | ऋ – ri. | ए – e. |
| ऐ – ai. | ओ – o. | औ – ou, or au. | |
| क – k. | ख – kh. | ग – g. | घ – gh. |
| च – ch. | छ – chh. | ज – j. | झ – z or jh. |
| ट – ṭ. | ठ – ṭh. | ड – ḍ. | ढ – ḍh. |
| ण – ṇ. | त – t. | थ – th. | द – d. |
| ध – dh. | न – n. | प – p. | फ – ph. |
| ब – b. | भ – bh. | म – m. | य – y. |
| र – r. | ल – l. | व – v or w. | श – sh. |
| ष – ṣh. | स – s. | ह – h. | ळ – ḷ. |
| | क्ष – kṣh. | ज्ञ – jn. | |

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## Marathi months and their English parallels.

1. Chaitra = March–April.
2. Vaishākh = April–May.
3. Jyeshṭha = May–June.
4. Aṣhāḍh = June–July.
5. Shrāvaṇ = July–August.
6. Bhādrapad = August–Sept.
7. Ashvin = September-Oct.
8. Kārtik = October–November
9. Mārgashīrṣha = Nov.–Dec.
10. Pouṣha = December–January
11. Māgh = January–February.
12. Phālgun = February–March.

# PREFACE

Most of the material presented in the following pages has been adopted from my thesis 'Folk-dance and Physical Education,' approved for the Ph. D. degree by the University of Bombay.

When I started my research studies, I had no idea that my material would be presented in the form in which it appears to-day. I was then working in the field of physical education for well-nigh over 15 years and was inclined to work on 'Social Needs and Physical Education.' My teacher, Dr. Ghurye, but for whom neither the field-work nor the publication of this booklet would have been feasible, suggested the study of folk-dance. In those days, activities in the sphere of physical education mostly touched the advanced classes. Naturally, this field-work was practically new to me. For this very reason, I liked the subject for the choice of which I must express my indebtedness to my learned teacher.

Our original plan was to make a comparative study of the folk-dances all over India. I even travelled and studied some of the leading folk-dances of Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and some parts of South India. But I had to give up my plan of making an all-India survey owing to the then acute travelling and other handicaps. We then decided to limit the sphere of enquiry to Maharashtra and it is the results of this enquiry that form the substance of the present work.

From what I have read and seen about folk-dances outside Maharashtra, I may venture to say that the limitation of area regarding the present enquiry has not much affected the variety of dance types most of which are represented in some form or other in Maharashtra. I had little idea that Maharashtra offered such a variety of folk-dance when I launched on my enquiry. Cultural and regional differences mostly are responsible for this variety which is equally interesting and instructive.

Although I am led to believe that most of the Indian folk-dances are represented in some form or other in the folk-

dances of Maharashtra, the statement has to be substantiated by a careful and comparative study of Indian folk-dance. I desire to work on this problem, time and other factors permitting.

The author takes this opportunity to express his sense of gratitude for the very willing and sympathetic help he received from friends during his tours for the collection of material. Shri. Nanasaheb Chapekar of Badlapur, Shri. G. V. Apte of Sholapur, Shri. V. H. Pethe and Shrimati Yashodabai Pethe of Dadar, Shri. Babasaheb Patki of Bhiladi, Dr. R. O. Bhat of Nandurbar, Shri. Madhusudan Dharap of Mahad, Shri. Vasudevrao Paranjpe of Belgaum, Shri. Abasaheb Jog of Tasgaon, Shri. Madhavrao Paranjape of Pachora, Shri. Dattopant Bapat of Kalambashte, Sangameshwar, Shri. P. K. and K. B. Mahabal of Nasik, Shri. G. P. Kale of Sinnar, Shri. Baburao Joshi of Karajgaon, Shri. Annasaheb Mehendale of Gimhavane, however, must be particularly mentioned.

The author acknowledges his indebtedness to the University of Bombay for the grant-in-aid received by him from the University towards the cost of publication of this work.

The author has also to thank Prin. P. M. Joseph of T. I. P. E. Kandivali, for the valuable suggestions he made in connection with the present work.

The notation is prepared by my friend Shri. L. J. Manohar.

Dr. L. N. Chapekar took great pains in going through the manuscript carefully and seeing the book through the press.

Lastly, I cannot be ungrateful to my innumerable friends who participated in the dances which were arranged sometimes during an off-season and even at odd times. In fact it is they who provided me with what now forms the basis of this work.

A. J. Agarkar

# I

## INTRODUCTORY

Sociological study of early communities in various parts of the world has clearly revealed the important part played by folk-dances in the social life of these communities. They served not merely a recreational or aesthetic purpose but were integrally related with all the aspects of social life and were a living and dynamic expression of the manifold sides of that life. They were not consciously or deliberately created by any person or persons to serve a specific purpose but grew out of the social life itself, changing and evolving as the social life itself changed and evolved. All the important aspects of group life and its major occasions found communal expression through these dances and all its customs and manners and phases of institutional life were reflected in them. The folk-dances of early societies, thus serve as a mirror clearly reflecting the dynamic aspects and living significance of these societies and as such are of fundamental importance to the understanding of these societies.

Maharashtra affords a good scope for such a study. There are at least three main groups which are more or less culturally distinct, namely, the Brahmins and the other advanced classes, the agriculturists and allied groups and the hill-tribes. There is a wide range as regards the ways of thinking and behaviour in these groups. The division of Maharashtra in the two natural regions of Konkan and the Ghatside, varying in climatic and other conditions is an additional asset for comparison and contrast. The element of dancing though differing in degree and manner does exist even today in all these groups. This difference which is remarkably great, as we shall see later on, and the other factors mentioned above can with advantage be utilised for the analysis of the disrespect and decay the folk-dance of Maharashtra has tended to fall into.

There are, however, certain elements in folk-dance which are useful for all times to any human society. The place of folk-dance in society is determined by the form in which it is presented and the purpose for which its existence is deemed necessary. Maharashtra has a rich heritage. Most of the dance forms and movements, the simple but effective instruments, the easy but forceful tune of the dance-songs can make a substantial contribution to the programme of physical education of the province and of the country.

The present work is an attempt to study the extant folk dances of a specific culture region-the Maharashtra-with a view to evaluating their social significance and to show the place occupied and purpose served by them in the complex social fabric of the various communities inhabiting this region.

Before presenting the proper study of the various elements in the folk-dances of Maharashtra it will be in the fitness of things to know something about the people belonging to different castes, sub-castes and tribes in Maharashtra, specially with reference to their physical surroundings, their occupations, their social and economic status and their cultural level, in order to clearly understand their views on, attitude towards, beliefs in, and the social significance they attach to the folk-dances of their own groups or of other groups.

Maharashtra is divided by the Sahyadri in two main natural divisions, the Ghat-side and Konkan. The Ghatside is more or less a big plateau and the soil is black and fertile. Konkan on the contrary is a narrow strip of land stretching along the Sahyadri and is bounded on the western side by the Arabian sea. The southern part of Konkan specially is full of rocks and hills. As a consequence, this part is far from fertile notwithstanding the fact that Alfonso mangoes, so far known best in world are grown in this part of Konkan only. The northern part comprising Kolaba and Thana districts is comparatively fertile and though the ranges of the Sahyadri penetrate at places right up to the Arabian sea even in these districts, there are wide plains where much rice is grown. On the Ghat-side, the fertility of the soil affords the cultivator facility to grow practically any crop if there is adequate water supply.

The climatic conditions of these natural regions of Maharashtra also differ to a very great extent. There is a heavy rainfall during the monsoon in Konkan; and neither the winter is very cold nor the summer very hot. The climate is more or less equable. On the Ghat-side on the contrary, the average rainfall is very low, so much so that the districts of Ahmednagar and Sholapur are often the visiting places of drought. The winter is very cold and the heat of the summer in many places is quite oppressive.

The occupations, however, do not differ much. India is essentially an agricultural country and Maharashtra is no exception to it. Agriculture is therefore, the main occupation of the people of the Ghats and Konkan alike. The southern part of Konkan being the most unfertile and comparatively thickly populated, the inhabitants of that district emigrate every year to earn a living either by intellectual or physical labour. Bombay is the favourite resort of most of such emigrants and right from the top ranks in the intellectual fields down to the sweepers of the streets in every walk of life, excepting perhaps commerce, one comes across a number of persons belonging to this district. Such emigrants from the Ghat-side are comparatively few and the majority of them are from the working classes, many of them working as mill-hands or as coolies at the railway stations or docks. Traditionally being a self-sufficient unit with its *balutedār* system, each village has its own craftsmen the goldsmith (*sonār*), the carpenter (*sutār*), the pot-maker (*kumbhār*), the oilman (*telī*), the washerman (*parīt*), the shoe-maker (*chāmbhār*) and the like. Apart from these groups having different callings by heredity as well as by profession, there are certain other groups and tribes engaged in other seasonal or regular occupations. Stone-cutting for instance, is a calling by itself and the people pursuing that profession are known as *Pātharvats* (stone-cutters). The Warlis are seasonal timber-cutters, and the Katkaris, coal and catechu-makers. Many of the Agris are engaged in salt industry. Such is more or less the general outline of the various occupations of the people of Maharashtra.

We shall now turn our attention to the different castes and tribes, which have been selected for being described in

this chapter. They have been selected either because they represent a type or because they are useful for comparison. We shall start from the Brahmins, who form the apex of the caste system and are believed to represent the highest type of Hindu culture. There are a number of sub-castes among the Brahmins, but we are going to deal with only two of them, namely, the Chitpavans and the Deshasthas. The former reside mainly in the Konkan and the latter on the Ghat-side. This selection has been mainly based on two considerations, namely, the remarkable difference (i) in geographical surroundings and (ii) in certain social observances.

**The Chitpavans.**

The ancient habitat of the Chitpavans is Konkan, and hence they are also known as 'Konkanasthas'. When and whence they came and settled down in Konkan is not so far definitely known. It appears however, that for a long time they have been the inhabitants of Konkan and Konkan only. It is only during the 18th and the 19th centuries that a considerable number of Chitpavans emigrated and spread all over the Ghat-side, when the Chitpavan Peshwas were, the *de facto* rulers of Maharashtra. Most of them have since then settled down on the Ghat-side; yet, the majority of them is still to be found in Konkan.

As a class, they are well-educated and many of them are employed as clerks or teachers. A large majority of them possess landed property. Individual holdings are small and few of them are actual tillers of land. For court-purposes, however, specially to exploit the Tenancy Act, practically every one of them residing in Konkan gives cultivation as his occupation.

Cultivation of course they do, but mostly with the help of hired labour. As a consequence, they get enough leisure and it will be interesting to note how these people arrange their day-to-day programme and pass off months and years of their life, confined for the most part to their villages only. I shall narrate from my experience, the village-life of these people in general, during the last twenty-five years.

Joint families amongst the Chitpavans some thirty years back were numerous. They took pride in staying together as members of a big joint family. With the old grand-father or the eldest male member of the family at its head, the number of the inmates more often than not exceeded a dozen, if not a score. Things have changed so fast during the last twenty-five years in this respect that the joint-family system has nearly become a thing of the past. What was common two or three decades back has become a rare phenomenon these days, as we have really to search for a joint-family worth the name. The change, however, has not been a smooth affair. I have seen a number of families economically ruined because of partitions and sub-division of property, which were in many cases decided in the courts of law. There was a time when separating from a joint-family had almost become a fashion and fighting in the court a pastime. There is, however, a set-back to this tendency, though the slanders of the litigious characteristic attributed to the Chitpavans are still hovering. Brothers no longer fight in courts of law for partition as before. Perhaps there has remained little to fight for; perhaps they have realized the folly of the preceding generation with the economic loss that it had entailed. The consequence is that more and more people are driven to the cities every year and the number of the inmates of a family is becoming smaller.

Even though there are now no joint or big families worth the name, the daily morning routine has not undergone any considerable change. What was being done on a large scale is now being done on a smaller scale. All female members of the family excepting the very young get up at day-break. Of course, the house-wife is up much earlier. Formerly, her first concern was to make preparations for churning buttermilk ; nowadays, in many families, tea is the first item attended to by her. The women are very busy till noon in doing their personal as well as household duties, such as sweeping regularly and dungwashing occasionally the floor and the courtyard, plucking flowers, taking their everyday bath, washing clothes, fetching water, preparing the meals and the like. After the noon-meals are over, they are tempted

to have a little nap, which they deserve and can well afford, since they get some leisure time in the afternoon. Formerly, the noontime activities were quite different. Families being big, women were not compelled to work single-handed as is the case in many families today. Naturally, grinding and husking corn, sewing and such other petty things required to meet the family needs could easily be done by the womenfolk of the family. On certain occasions like preparing parched rice, the help of the women in the neighbourhood and relatives residing in the same village was freely exchanged and this indirectly helped social intercourse. In spite of all this work, they could snatch some time for a game at cowries or draughts. These games are now nearly extinct and new ones have not been successfully substituted. Most of the work formerly done by housemates is now done by hired labour. Only the orthodox element in the family persists in doing things themselves on grounds of ceremonial purity. Before evening, women in former days used to visit village temples regularly; now they do so only on holidays and days of festivities.

Most of the fast and festival days of the Hindus occur in the *chāturmās*, which begins from the 10th day of the bright half of Āṣhāḍh and comes to a close on the 12th day of the bright half of Kārtik. During this season, in many villages, some sacred text, generally the *Bhāgwat* or the *Mahābharāt* was read and explained by Brahmin professionals, known as *Purāṇiks*. Women, especially the elderly ones, regularly attended these sermons. In very few of these villages, this tradition has been preserved and wherever it is still continued the audience is very poor. This is due to the disintegration of joint families and the diminishing faith in the efficacy of the hearing of *Purāṇas*. Same is the case with other fasts and festivals. Whether as a result of the change that we have spoken about or as a result of more complex set of circumstances, a difference is marked between the women of the older generation and those of the present. Whereas the former were physiologically healthy, the latter appear to be comparatively not robust. The *Mangalāgour* provides a very good illustration. The women now enjoy more

freedom and latitude. Yet the performance is not half so lively as it formerly used to be. The whole night on *Mangalāgour* day was spent in various activities, dances of different types being the main feature. One who slept or was inclined to sleep was laughed and jeered at. The occasion provided an opportunity for self-expression. It was a test of strength, stamina and skill and the participants took pride in exhibiting their skill and capacity. Then came a time when these activities were looked down upon as primitive, The religious belief underlying such observances was also day by day being undermined. This was coupled with the physical deterioration of the younger generation mostly due to the lack of physical labour and partially due to malnutrition. The combined effect was the neglect of this once coveted and awaited festival. It is only very recently that efforts are being made to rejuvenate indigenous activities that are wholesome, with the result that such activities are at present performed and demonstrated even by High School and College girls. But now the motive is health and recreation and not religion.

Children attending primary schools had to wake up by daybreak, since those schools met both in the morning and in the afternooon. Children used to eat cooked rice in a slightly liquid form before going to school. Tea has been substituted in some families nowadays. After the midday meals till the school time of the noon session, children used to play for some time on all weekdays. Saturday evenings and Sundays were their galla days. Boys and girls played many of the games together. The girls joining in these games were, however, very small, most of them being married by the time they attained the age of twelve. But due to the agitation of social reformers and certain economic factors the age of marriage has increased and now we see even the orthodox people not in a hurry to get their daughters married before sixteen. The suitable age for marriage of a girl is now considered to be between eighteen and twenty. The effect of this change was markedly seen in the games. Their is a sex-consciousness created in children, with the result that the games in which girls and boys participated without any restrain or distinction are totally given

up. Boys of ten and twelve even used to take active part in the *Mangalāgour* festival. That too has disappeared for the same reason.

*Goph* and *ṭiprī* were the dances specially meant for boys between ten and fourteen, and they felt elated when they were selected for performing these dances. Both these dances in course of time have lost the glamour, since these also like the *Mangalāgour* activities are stamped as primitive, fit for the backward people to indulge in. Only of late have people realized that not only are they not primitive, but they require the dexterity, the skill, the presence of mind and the elegance of movement, which a cultured man may well be proud of. It will take some more time for these dances to regain their former social recognition and value.

The male section of a Chitpavan family is also habituated to get up before daybreak. The first thing men do is to look after the cattle, which are not generally attended to during the sleeping hours. After finishing personal duties their first task is to milk the cows and sweep the cowpen clean, if that work is not entrusted to a servant. There were many and there are still not a few, who take pride and personal interest in the cattle and they will not entrust the work of cleaning the cowpen to anyone else, since they do not expect as much cleanliness from others. They used to put in some physical labour during the morning time and practically every Chitpavan house in Konkan has at least a small piece of land adjoining the house which offers a good scope for gardening. The practice is still continued by many. After taking their bath, they used to spend an hour or so in the worship of household deities and most of them regularly visited the village temples in their sacred garments, with all the paraphernalia necessary for worship. Nowadays, the time of worship has been curtailed and very few visit the village temples. Sometimes this is left to boys and in some cases even to old women. The village and household deities have lost their hold to a marked degree.

After their noonmeals they used to have a little nap and could afford to spend an hour or two in playing at chess, draughts, or *ganjiphas* according to ability and liking. These

games are now seldom played. The last one is thought of as out-of-date, the middle one is taken to be fit for women and the first one is neglected, more likely because of the fact that they are unable to undergo the nervous strain and concentration this game demands than anything else. Playing at cards has become more popular, but it has not been able to attract the same proportion of participants. People are becoming more individualistic. After some light work or writing business, they used to visit the village temples by, evening, in their usual costume and without any worshipping material. As a rule it was more of a stroll and chitchating with acquaintances meeting casually on the way. At about sunset, they tried to be back since that was again the time for milking. They used to dine before nine. In this respect there has been no material change.

In *chāturmās* only men of advanced age used to attend the reading of the *purāṇas*. *Kīrtans* were attended by all. Formerly *Kīrtan* was a necessary item in the festival of any village deity. Casual *Kīrtans* were many times performed by *Kīrtankārs* who happend to pass by the village. This profession of *Kīrtankār* and the institution of *Kīrtan* is meeting the same fate as that of the profession of *Purāṇiks* and the institution of the reading of the *Purāṇ*. The reasons are again the same. Not that the people have no leisure time to attend such sermons, but they have become more materialistic and the intensity of religious belief in these institutions and professionals is practically lacking. Even so is the case with dancing. The solitary dance, which the adults enjoyed and performed with a religious fervour was the *kālā* dance. That provided an occasion for the Chitpavan youth to exhibit his physical strength, his skill in wrestling and such other feats in the presence of all the men young and old as well as the young women of the village belonging to his caste. Then there came a time when the young men who had been to other places for higher education seemed to think it below their dignity to get their bodies exposed to rough handling and the sprinkling of buttermilk, curds and water. The real reason for non-participation, however, was that either they were inadept in various exercises or

physically delicate and not any feeling that participation was unbecoming for their class. That this diagnosis is correct is proved by the fact that those youths who were physically fit or adept in various exercises did take part in these performances, even if they happened to be college-returned youths from Poona or Bombay. It must be admitted at the same time that those educated young men joined for the sake of fun rather than from any religious belief. It was feared and rightly too that within few years this dance and even the celebratoin of the occassion may disappear. The conditions have slightly improved, but one cannot be yet certain about its future.

The attitude of the Chitpavans as a class towards dances of other castes and tribes is quite sympathetic. Dancing groups, which visit their houses, are given a courteous treatment. Men, women and children of the house and those of the neighbourhood as well come out to watch the performance and some groups are asked to sing a particular song or dance a theme, in which they are supposed to excel or which the audience is able to understand, To the professional *tamāshās* however, they are apathetic. Persons performing and witnessing these are looked down upon and the word *tamāsgīr* has become a term of contempt. This was mostly due to the erotic sentiment dominating these *tāmashās*, created by songs and the type of dancing which was many times indescribably obscene. There have been however, persons amongst them, who patronised the *tāmasgīrs* not only by witnessing their performances, but by allowing them to be performed in their own courtyard. Such people were in no case excommunicated. But social approval by the Chitpavans as a class it never had. The attitude is undergoing a change. The *tāmashā* is also becoming more decent and it will not be long before it gets social recognition both as an art-form and as a mode of amusement, even from the Chitpavans and other advanced classes.

**The Deshastha Brahmins.**

The Deshastha Brahmins have been the inhabitants of the Ghat-side for a number of years. The Ghat-side is also

known as *Desh* and hence the term Deshastha, which means one residing in *Desh*, is applied to this class of Brahmins. Jnyaneshwar, the great Marathi poet, saint and philosopher belongs to their stock and his time dates as back as the middle of the 13th century A.D. It is quite evident, therefore, that these people must have settled on the Ghat-side at least for six centuries if not much longer. The land being fertile, there was no cause for emigration on economic grounds as in the case of the Chitpavans. But during the time of Shivaji a few families descended into Konkan and settled round about Raigad fort, the then capital of the Maratha Dominion. Recently, a number of them, specially from villages where they were few in number, have run down to cities like Bombay as a result of the non-Brahmin movement. Even then, compared with the Chitpavans, their number appears to be quite negligible. A vast majority is still sticking to the homeland of their forefathers.

As a class most of them are literate, being Brahmins, but few have received higher education and fewer still shine in the academic field as the upper classes of Konkan. They are a well-to-do people and that is perhaps the main reason why they did not hanker after higher education. As a consequence, they, are more conservative and orthodox. As agriculturists they are less industrious and can very well afford to do so, the soil being very fertile. There are more or less three distinct classes in this group, though they interdine and intermarry. The *Sardars*, *Jahagirdars* and *Inamdars* form one class, the *Kulkarnis* and *Joshis* another, and *Bhikshuks* and agriculturists, the third. The first one is supposed to be the richest amongst these, though as a matter of fact a number of them are on the verge of bankruptcy. The *Kulkarnis* and the *Joshi* enjoyed till very recently the hereditary rights of collecting revenue and of priesthood respectively, These have now been abolished by law. *Bhikshukas* are such of the Brahmins as have studied the *Vedas* and render help in religious functions whenever called upon. They are few in number and day by day the number is getting diminished. The agriculturists form perhaps the major bulk, but many of them are farmers only in name. Actual tillers of the soil are very few.

The daily routine of a Deshastha Brahmin does not substantially differ from that of the Chitpavan. There is, however, some difference as regards the way in which things are done. They are rather slow and a charge is often levelled against the Deshasthas that to be neat and tidy is foreign to them and to some extent it is true. They are not rice-eaters like the Chitpavans, their staple food being the bread of *jowar* or *bajra* and of wheat in some places. Rice is of course cooked in every household, but more for religious purposes like offering oblations to the fire than for consumption,

Tea made its entry in the villages of *Desh* much later than in Konkan, but now it has taken as firm a root and is as widespread as in Konkan in a comparatively smallar period, Formerly, children were invariably given enough milk and there was adequate milk supply. Now, there is a scarcity of milk and milk products, mainly because it is sent to towns, the means of transport having been considerably improved. This is one of the important causes of physical deterioration of the Deshasthas today.

These people get comparatively more leisure time than the Chitpavans, but they have no additional ways and means of utilizing this time. The number and types of games, the everyday religious observances and even the fairs and festivals are not more in number than in Konkan. Wrestling on the Ghat-side had, and still to much extent has, a very great social recognition just like the cricket in Bombay. Even then amongst these people, though wrestling is not quite looked down upon, a successful wrestler does not get the same social recognition as one getting through his matriculation. Consequently, participation in wrestling, which is so popular and which is invariably an item of very great importance in every fair on Ghat-side is not encouraged. Dances for boys and men they have none. Only in some places the *kālā* dance is observed. But it is performed rather on religious grounds than as a form of social entertainment. The girls and women however, have nearly all the types of dancing activities as the Chitpavans, Only because the *Mahālaxmī* festival is not observed by these women, the blowing in of air in empty water pots is not indulged in. *Dhende Nāchavaṇe* at the

time of marriage procession was common some forty years back. It is now totally extinct amognst these people, though we can still see this practised amongst the lower caste people at the time of marriage procession.

The attitude of these people towards dancing is not unsympathetic. The people on the Ghat-side in general are more fond of witnessing a dance than actually participating in it. They attend the *tamāshās* in large numbers. There are two distinct types of *tamāshās*. The one with *vīṇā* and other musical instruments for accompaniment has more of classical singing and the Brahmins prefer to witness their performances. Even a *shastri* can attend such performances without incurring any blemish. They also have *Gondhaḷs* which by tradition are a necessary adjunct to a marriage or an initiation ceremony.

**The Kunbis.**

The Kunbis of Konkan are perhaps the most hard-working people of Maharashtra. They are mainly agriculturists, and casually farm-labourers and domestic servants, The land they till is far from fertile, so much so, that even after putting the maximum amount of labour a human being is capable of, a Kunbi is hardly able to provide a square meal to all themembers of his family. Food rationing we are experiencing only during the 2nd world war. A Kunbi, specially belonging to Ratnagiri district, is accustomed to it for generations. It has become almost traditional amongst them, that the man who works with the plough is alone entitled to a full loaf, others have to be satisfied and carry on with only a half. It is no wonder, therefore, that he is forced to contract debts for ceremonies like marriage, when he has to provide for a dinner to his caste-fellows. Formerly the only way to repay such debts was in the form of servitude for a number of years. One would not believe in these days that there had been instances in which these people had become domestic servants of the money-lender for generations together, a sort of serfdom.

It is during the last twenty years or so that there has come about a recognisable change. A number of Kunbis have

been leaving for cities to find work there. The natural consequence is the shortage of labour in their respective villages, which circumstance has helped the stay-away-at-home people to get better conditions. This change of condition is reflected in better houses, which now have Manglore-tile roofs instead of thatched ones. There have been of late instances of marriages, wherein the money-lender was not at all approached and there are many cases in which the debt contracted is quite negligible and the duration of servitude for the money borrowed is comparatively short, exceeding, only in rare cases, a period of five years.

Bread, prepared from *nāgli*-flour and fish is the cherished food of the Kunbis. Occasional contact with Brahmins and other higher class people, amongst whom tea-drinking had already taken firm root, has accustomed them to tea so much so that they have become its slaves. This however, has not made them teetotalers. Men are addicted to liquor as strongly as before. Only the time of the sway of these two kinds of liquids differs. The liquor is generally drunk in the evening, tea during day-time. Much money is spent on toddy in ceremonies like marriage and on occasions like birth and death. On festival days they must drink. Few of them will have at least one bottle of toddy every day if possible. Most of them are moderate, too much indulgence is looked down upon and abstinence is respected. Smoking and betel-leaf eating is common, the latter being enjoyed by both the sexes alike. Children are expected not to drink, smoke or eat *pan*. To offer *pan* is the usual way of showing hospitality and the habit of eating it is considered to be a necessity. Even in the midst of hard work, when time is pressing, they will snatch a few seconds to eat *pan*. It serves the purpose of both diversion and rest. It gives rest to bullocks yoked to the plough automatically ; and a farmer interested in his cattle will think twice before allowing his bullocks to be handled by one who does not eat *pan*.

Family system among the Kunbis is undergoing the same change as among the Brahmins. Joint families are nearly extinct. This has not, however, much affected the daily routine. Getting up early in the morning and attending to his personal

duties first, a male is out to continue the work left half-done overnight or to start a new one. His breakfast and midday meals he generally eats at the place where he is working. With a little rest in the afternoon he is again at his work till it is dark. After returning home he takes his meal, which is of necessity light and within a short time becomes half-dead with fatigue and enjoys a sound sleep which he needs most.

The women join the men in work a little later, though they get up much early. Their first task is to grind flour for bread and then to fetch water and prepare breakfast and the midday meals. They carry the breakfast as well as the meal to the fields where other members of the family are working. The task of looking after children is left to old women. The women return home a little earlier as they have to prepare food. At about dusk they take their bath, which time is preferred for two reasons. They do not take bath in the morning as they have to work in the fields throughout the day and also due to the scarcity of clothes and lack of enclosed places for bath. They have no time to indulge in games of any type; and *Gour* is the only occasion when they have a good deal of dancing and make the best of it.

Primary education is compulsory today. Formerly, however, children were seldom sent to school. The immediate problem of earning one's bread puts aside all other considerations of furthering prospects by becoming literate. It is also beyond the vision of those tradition-bound simple folk. Children, therefore, are employed somewhere in the same village or one nearby mostly in the households of some well-to-do persons or are sent to look after the cattle, which to a Kunbi is a matter of pride, a source of income and is also indispensable, as it is a great asset to his agriculture both as regards manure and service.

The Kunbi is very orthodox and conservative. A person wishing to have a haircrop on the western style was some years back threatened with excommunication and it took nearly twenty years and even more for the Kunbi to get reconciled to this fashion of the West. His ways of behaviour and mode of life are perfectly in accordance with the traditions of his caste, He hardly ever goes to a court of law

for getting redress against grievances from his own caste-fellows in spite of the fact that they live in close vicinity of the litigious Chitpavans. Even otherwise, he seldom takes the initiative, since he has no ability, money or time to indulge in such costly and tedious proceedings. Till very recently he was satisfied with the decisions of the panchayat. Nowadays with slightly improved economic conditions he also casually consults the lawyer for legal advice both on matters civil as well as criminal. But it is still rare.

Conservative by nature, orthodox by tradition and industrious by necessity, he finds little time for indulging in activities other than those related to his occupation. Only in his childhood he might have spent some time in playing what minor games he could while grazing the cattle. But tradition has preserved two occasions at about intervals of six months for his recreation, the first being *Gour* and the second *Shimgā*.

Of all the festivals the Kunbi observes, these two are considered the most important by him. There is a good deal of dancing, drinking and good food ; and a Kunbi is very particular in making savings for these festivals. The occasion for community-dancing in which each and every member of his caste, excepting the physically disabled, participates is the *Gour* festival. In *Shimgā* there is more of merrymaking, but community-dancing is absent. It is left to small groups to form dancing parties; others are expected to join and sing the chorus. Each hamlet usually organizes only one dancing party for each type of dance, competition amongst residents of the same area being disapproved. Although these festivals serve as a sort of recreation to the Kunbi, who enjoys a lot of fun during the festivals and even few days prior to them, his attitude towards these festivals is more of a religious nature. He has firm belief in the efficacy and religious significance of the participation. If he is unable to participate he thinks that he has missed something very important. Even then a keen observer can detect a slow but gradual change in the attitude of the Kunbi towards dancing. He has not become so sophisticated as to look down upon these activities nor has become so much physically run down and degenerate as not

to participate in the dance. But with all these, the keen enthusiasm which he formerly used to exhibit is sadly missing, mostly due to the fact that the firm religious belief he once had is gradually getting undermined.

**The Agris.**

The Agris are distributed normally from Kelva-Mahim in Thana district down to Janjira state in the Kolaba district. They are to be found on both sides of the estuaries of this area One peculiar point about these people is that miles and miles you go and Agris and Agris you find *en masse*. They are mainly agriculturists by profession, a few of them being engaged in the transport of sand from the Amba and Ulhas creeks to Bombay.

A normal Agri is known for hard work in emergency. Long continuous work for days and months on end is not necessary as the soil is fertile. Rice is the main crop he grows, but he is not required to go through the laborious process of trans-plantation which demands great attention, careful manipulation and continuons hard work throughout the period, on the part of a rice cultivator of Ratnagiri or Thana district. The Agri has to be comparatively more busy during summer when he has to upturn the big clods of earth in his fields. But, then neither the time is so pressing nor are the circumstances so doubtful as in the rainy season. A day here or a day there does not affect the work in any way. After the clods are upturned he has simply to broadcast the seeds at the rainy season. If the shoots come out in good condition, he has to go to the fields only for harvesting. The knee-deep mud in the fields makes weeding impracticable.

Since the land they till is quite fertile, the Agris, as a class, are not badly off. At least they have enough to eat. As a consequence, there has never been any emigration on a large scale, though Bombay, the attraction for employment to the majority of Ratnagiri people is so close.

Most of their work is done in a cooperative manner, locally known as *handā* system. They move in groups from

field to field and here they share food in common, which generally consists of rice and fish. Unity is not observable in manual labour alone, the Agris being well-known for their social unity. The Agri is quick-tempered. Even a slight provocation is enough to offer him an excuse for picking quarrel and yet he rarely resorts to a court of law. His caste *baiṭhak* is still quite effective and he abides by its decision.

His daily routine slightly differs from that of the Kunbi of the Ratnagiri district. He is neither an early-riser nor is he so hard working. Only in summer he is rather hardpressed, due to the scarcity of fresh water which at times he has to fetch even from a distance of six miles. Toddy-drinking is neither abhorred nor looked down upon. It is a habit. Tea has been a recent addition. *Pān*-eating is not so common as smoking. Amongst women, only the old smoke. Children seldom go to school. There are however, a few educated persons amongst them and they have done more harm than good to their caste-fellows as regards dancing. Some twenty-years back, when there was no educated element amongst them, dancing amongst men was common as in other castes. Possessed by the notion of dancing being primitive, these few educated have been successful in eradicating dancing from amongst the male section. As a rule Agri men from the Kolaba district do not dance nowadays to any appreciable degree.

Other activities without work motif are also very few. Only in *Shimgā* they play *ātyāpātyā*. *Bhajan* is becoming more and more popular, but it is not always a sober affair. Drinking before and after is permissible though in the actual performance, it is strictly prohibited. Seasonal bullock-cart racing is also enjoyed to a very large extent.

Women have successfully kept up their old traditional dances and songs. Some songs are so lengthy that they take more than two hours to recite. They dance on the *Gour*, *Divāḷī* and *Shimgā* festivals. The movements of the dance are rather slow and monotonous. Nevertheless, they carry out the dance to the end quite cheerfully, and are never weary of completing the song, however lengthy. It is perhaps due to religious belief which makes imperative that a theme be danced to the end. Spectators they need

not have. They enjoy the dancing by themselves. Many of the dancing songs contain stories from the *Purāṇas* and the story runs very smoothly. Even small details are not missed. This is also one of the reasons why the monotony of the movements is not keenly felt.

**The Marathas.**

The Marathas are recognised as a warrior race and they have a history to substantiate this statement. Even today, a number of them are serving in the army both in India and abroad. They are distributed all over Maharashtra, the majority residing on the Ghatside. The term Maratha is rather loosely used, but the Marathas belonging to the 96 families, known as *Shyannav Kuli* profess themselves to be the pure section of the Marathas and they decline to intermarry with the Marathas not belonging to this fold.

These *96 kuli* Marathas have two distinct classes, the first one comprising the *sardārs, jahāgirdārs, ināmdārs* and *Deshmukhs* in and outside Maharashtra and the second one comprising the actual tillers of land who are mostly confined to the Ghatside. The former is an aristocratic class and the women in many of the families belonging to this class still observe purdah. The present economic condition of this class is, however, not very satisfactory. Many of them are on the verge of bankruptcy, wine and women being the principal drains on the ancestral property which in few cases is personally looked after.

The food problem is not very acute with the agriculturist class. The people spend much money at the time of marriage; and the observance of funeral rites is also a costly affair. These are the occasions when they get into the clutches of the money-lenders. When the harvest is good and one is able to lay aside some money the first consideration of a Maratha specially belonging to the Nasik and Nagar districts will be to purchase an open light cart drawn, absurd as it may appear, by a bullock and a horse. With this vehicle he will race to a place of a fair gaily dressed, with his keep or a woman hired for the occasion behind him.

Polygyny was common amongst the Marathas until it was prohibited by a recent enactment. The aristocrats took to additional wives because it was considered fashionable while to farmers, polygyny meant additional hands

The daily routine of both these classes amongst the Marathas differ widely. The agriculturist gets up before dawn and starts work by the time there is enough light. At about nine his wife brings his breakfast and lunch. Fomerly, this was the only time when the wife could exchange a few sweet nothings with her husband since young husband and wife talking together was considered in those days as immodest and not becoming cultured people. After breakfast he resumes work and carries on till about twelve. He then takes rest for nearly three hours excessive heat being unbearable. He returns home by dusk.

The aristocrats on the other hand are generally late in getting up; they are seldom in a hurry. Doing things in a leisurely way is fashionable amongst them. Most of them actually idle away their time. In the evening, they listen to the reports from their tenants. *Pān*-eating and smoking *hukkā* are their leisure-time activities. Neither men nor women of this class indulge in any type of community dancing. *Virs* and *Dashāvatārs* are the only individualistic dances in which persons concerned are compelled by tradition to participate, even if they are unwilling. Some of the educated persons try to avoid these performances, partly because they have no faith left but chiefly because they think it below their dignity. A few of them are interested in wrestling but many are inclined only to patronise the art. Hunting whenever possible is practised with much enthusiasm.

The male section of the agriculturists, also, has few dances. *Lezim* is the only dance in which they participate. In few southern districts *tiprī* dance is also performed. The Marathas who belong to the *Vārkarī* cult participate in the *dindī* dance as well. They are, however, more interested in wrestling. They flock in numbers to fairs where wrestling tournaments locally known as *phads* are held. They drink generally on bazar days, and on days of festivals. Smoking pipe- *chilīm* is more common than *pān*-eating.

The women have dancing on *Akshaya-tritiyā* when women of the villages on either side of a river gather on its banks, perform different types of dances and sing songs throwing abuses at each other. In some places they actually pelt stones and the winning side is hopeful of reaping a better harvest than the other. Their dancing in marriage ceremony is also lively. Here also they hurl abuses in songs at the opposite party. *Dhende nāchavṇe* was formerly very common and in the interior it is practised even to this day, though people are not so enthusiastic as before.

About the dances of other people the attitude of these people is one of patronising. *Gondhaḷ* is to be performed as a religious adjunct to a marriage ceremony. *Tamāshās* are also very much favoured. The dances performed by dancing girls known as *kolhāṭīṇs* are also enthusiastically attended by these people.

**The Bhils.**

The whole of the plain at the foot of the Sātpuḍā ranges is inhabited by the Bhils in large numbers, Shahade and Taloda being the chief centres. There are also some small Bhil states and the chiefs are known as Rajas, though they are seldom better off than a petty *zamindār*. Intermarriages and interdining with the Rajas is not uncommon. The Rajas wear a respectable dress, though their distant relatives are not easily distinguished from the other Bhils.

As a class they are agriculturists and field-labourers. They also sell jungle produce such as honey, lac, fuel, etc. Even then the day-to-day life of a Bhil is very hard. A person who has saved something is an exception; to be in debt is the rule. Drinking has become the evil of the worst type and from what I could gather from my informants, no less them 75% of the income is spent on liquor. Their scantiness of dress is remarkable. In winter fireplace is their only protection against cold. Smoking is common, women and children being no exception.

*Divāḷī* and marriage ceremonies are the occasions for dancing, and their speciality is that they have a dance even

for the funeral occasion, unlike most other castes and tribes I have studied so far. But the dancing occasion *par excellence* is provided by *Shimgā*—the *Holī* festival. Whatever savings they can make are reserved for the occasion. They are very particular about appearance on this occasion, as their chief point is to make themselves conspicious at any cost. Those who can afford it try to achieve it by new, rich, gaudy dress. Those who are less fortunate even pinch their women-folk of their sarees and ornaments. Those who are unable to secure conspicuity through these means besmear their bare bodies with vivid colours. They have mixed-dancing on marriage occasion, but the tendency is to disown the fact toan outsider.

**The Katkaris.**

Of the tribes inhabiting the northern part of Sahyadri, the Katkari, is supposed to be at the lowest rung of the hierarchy. He is commonly believed to have earned his name from his profession of catechu-making, though Rajwade[1] thinks that his ancestors who used animal-skins for clothing are responsible for getting him the name. Katkaris, as a rule, are much darker and slimmer than members of the neighbouring hill tribes. The women are tall and slim, but singularly dirty and unkempt.

The Katkari builds his own hut. He can make fire with flint and iron. His hunting and fishing contrivances are also made by him.

Of late he has taken to cultivation but he is more valued as a labourer. His services are in demand everywhere. The landlord wants him because his labour is cheaper than that of the Kunbi. For the same reason contractors and dealers in coal, wood etc. prefer Katkari labour. When grain gets exhausted the Katkari gathers and sells fire-wood and wild honey. The Katkaris are very fond of hunting and with their bows and arrows they kill small dear, rabbits and monkeys. They also dig old threshing floors for rats and their stores of grain. They are notorious for stealing corn from fields and threshing floors.

1. Rajwade V. K., *Mahikavatichi Bakhar*, p. 84.

Even today the Katkari worships animistic gods. It is worth noting that the principal demon of the locality worshipped by other tribes, is reputed to be controlled by the Katkari. He believes in black-magic and its efficacy in doing harm to others. He is supposed to be expert in that art and is therefore much dreaded specially by the Kunbis.

The Katkari is very fond of dancing. Though *Divāḷi* is his principal festival for dancing, any occasion when leisure and liquor are available is equally good enough. He participates in the *senḍā* dance to compete with other groups. This acts as an incentive to collect new songs, and to get acquainted with *Paurāṇic* incidents.

These people being active participants in group dancing, have no great regard for the dancing of other groups. They witness *tamāshā* performances, but they prefer active participation to mere passive recreation.

## Other Castes and Tribes.

There are a number of other castes and tribes in this region. I do not intend to deal with each and everyone of them, because in the first place it would be rather unwieldy and, secondly, the representative character of the castes and tribes so far described is enough to serve our purpose.

The next four chapters record the factual data regarding the festive occasions occuring regularly during the cycle of the year as well as the special occasions, which are generally accompanied with dance performances, the movements and formations, the dress and musical instruments, songs and music.

# II

## OCCASIONS FOR DANCING

*Pāḍvā*. Barring a very insignificant number belonging to the commercial class, the whole Hindu population of Maharashtra observes *Guḍhī Pāḍvā* as their new year's day since, according to the *Shālivāhan* era, it is the first day of the first month of the year, namely Chaitra. It is a day supposed to be so auspicious that an astrologer need not be consulted about the auspiciousness of the day to start any good work. There are certain religious observances in the morning and the whole day is spent in merriment. Choice dishes are prepared, new clothes are put on, the surroundings of the house are cleaned and a flag or a piece of costly cloth, decorated with garland and crowned usually with a silver pot is hoisted at the top of a newly cut bamboo, placed at the entrance of the house. It marks the beginning of the *Chaitra Gourī* festival.

This festival continues till the *Dashāhāra* in Jyeshṭha. It is not, however, a continuous season of festivals. Certain days like Tuesdays and Fridays are preferred, because they are considered to be the special days of that particular goddess. It is generally observed by families of higher Hindu classes and particularly by those in which a new wedding has taken place, every year on some day which suits their convenience. It is an occasion when the newcomer in the family-the newly married girl—is introduced to and gets an opportunity of meeting the women of the village.

It is a general belief that whatever one does on this day is likely to repeat throughout the year. That is why people try to be merry and strive to do things, which will have a show-value and will stick on public memory. The *Chaitra Gourī pūjā* commonly known as *Haḷadī-kunkū* aims at the same thing. The goddess worshipped at that time is *Annapūrṇa*. Choice dishes are prepared and

placed in an artistic manner in front of the image of the goddess, which is seated in a decorated miniature cradle. Other things of artistic value and handicraft, prepared by the members of the family or bought from distant places or even borrowed from some relative nearby are arranged in an attractive manner. To be brief it is an exhibition of one's collection of arts and crafts. And in the midst of the show of pomp and splendour the highest index of prosperity is not missed. The family to be sure, must have plenty of material things. But it cannot afford to be without children. Its real prosperity depends on its young ones. Significantly, we find a small pot with a coconut on its top, dressed like a one year old child seated facing the goddess. With all this paraphernelia it is striking that there is no dancing, not even the ordinary favourite *phugaḍī*.

*Akshaya Tritiyā*. Like *Varsha Pratipadā*, *Akshaya Tritiyā* is also a day believed to be auspicious. On this day on Ghatside, all women of the village excepting those of the advanced classes gather on the bank of the village river. They dance in a circle, sometimes even with *tipris*. But the important function of this evening is to abuse the women of the neighbouring village, who have gathered on the opposite bank for the same purpose. There is a regular competition in hurling abusive rhymes at each other between the groups, and the group which fails to throw an equally curt and sharp rejoinder is taken to have vanquished.

In certain villages they go a step further. They actually pelt stones at one another. The party which gives in is supposed to have been defeated and there is a general belief that the winning group reaps a richer harvest the next season.

There is no such superstitious belief, however, on the Konkan side, though the importance of the day is equally admitted by all. *Ākhāṭī* i. e. *Akshāya Tritiyā* as the agriculturist of Konkan understands it, is a day which reminds him of the onset of monsoon which is not far off. The first task he undertakes is to see that his hut is properly roofed and covered to combat the heavy rains. He is more interested in making a good shelter for himself, his family and his cattle than in indulging in dancing, and abusing his neigh-

is less fond of dancing; on the contrary, he devotes many days and shows more enthusiasm but only in the months of Shrāvaṇ and Bhādrapad.

*Āshāḍhī Ekādashī*. Before proceeding to the dancing in Shrāvaṇ, we should not miss the purely religious dance in Ashāḍh. On the eleventh day of the bright half of Āshāḍh, the devotees of Vithoba of Pandharpur, march in groups and processions towards Pandharpur. The majority is of males, though females are not an exception. People from all classes participate. As a rule, they are grown up people though a youngster may be found here and there, if he happens to belong to a family that has vowed the *vārī* of Pandharpur and if there be no one else to fulfil the vow. Though the sanctity of the Pandharpur *kshetra* is acknowledged all over Maharashtra, it is generally the people from the Ghat-side that form the main conglomeration of this *Ekādashī* pilgrimage. The reason is quite obvious. Apart from the fact that Pandharpur is nearer to the people on Ghatside, the effect of the preachings of saints lik Namdeo and Tukaram who were staunch devotees of Vithoba is more pronounced on the Ghatside than in the Konkan. This is quite natural since both of them belonged to Ghatside. Avowed *vārkarī*, even from the farthest corner of Maharashtra shall not miss the occasion unless he is physically handicapped. The sentiment is so strong and deep-rooted that even in an ultra-modern city like Bombay, we see many *bhajan* parties marching to the temple of Vithoba at Vadala, dancing and singing *bhajans* through the streets of Bombay on this day.

Then comes Shrāvaṇ the month of sacred days, fasts and festivals, and it is quite natural that it should be so. The scorching heat of summer is totally forgotton; the heavy tormenting showers of rain have already subsided, the rigour of winter is still far ahead. Garbed in green, the earth is shining with all her splendour. Wild flowers of gorgeous colours are in abundance. For the agriculturist, it is just a respite between two bouts of hard work that he has to put in during the course of these four months in connection with his agricul-

tural work. Sowing, transplantation and weeding are now over. Harvesting is yet to come, In the interval he can afford to have a little recreation and relaxation. It is no wonder then that such a month is chosen as a sacred month for fasts, feasts, festivals and other auspicious purposes by the religious minded Hindu.

Among Brahmins and other advanced classes, women after their marriage have to worship the goddess Parvati, known commonly during this month as *Mangalāgour*, on each Tuesday for a period of five years. These worshippers are known on this occasion as *vasolya* i. e. those who have undertaken a vow. It is customary for women, especially newly married ones, to offer worship at home on the first and the last Tuesdays. On the remaining days a woman may join the worship at any place where she might be invited. When therefore, there are more households than one celebrating this festival there is a keen competition in securing the highest number of worshippers at one's place by way of showing one's importance and in acquiring and accumulating the paraphernalia for worship, so that the worshipped object may appear grand and imposing.

The *puja* ceremony and the feast arranged for the occasion is over by noon. In the afternoon married women as well as unmarried girls visit in groups the households where this *puja* is celebrated. *Phugadi* is the most important item during these visits. There is a good deal of competition, both as regards stamina in the *phugadi* dance and ready wit, in answering the *ukhāṇās*.

By evening all such visits are over and after light refreshments having been served to the invitees, the real entertainment programme in quite a congenial, informal and homely atmosphere follows. It consists of a variety of folk-dances and lasts even till day-break, if the participants are enthusiastic.

The whole show is purely a concern of females so much so that men are totally obliterated from or completely thrown in the background of the picture. Very young boys do join occasionally and old women, if they do not actually participate, take active interest in the whole show.

*Nāgpanchamī*, the fifth day of Shrāvaṇ, is observed as the day for the worship of *Nāg*, the cobra god. Earth is neither to be dug nor to be ploughed on that day. The women on the Ghatside visit ant-hills, where the cobra is supposed to reside, and offer worship. There is a sort of competition amongst girls specially, in swinging on a swing hung to the branches of tree, at a fairly good height. In Konkan, a picture of cobra drawn with sandle-wood paste or flour is worshipped at home. It is more or less a family concern, like the observance of Mondays and Saturdays and as such does not offer much scope for social intercourse.

*Nāraḷī Pourṇimā*, the full moon day of Shrāvaṇ is a festival which has got a definite social value of a high order. To the Brahmins and others entitled to wear the sacred thread, this day is auspicious for discarding the sacred thread that they have been wearing and putting on new ones after the performance of certain Vedic rites. The businessman worships the sea, which after a rough and stormy season of over a couple of months have by this time become quite calm and safe for the mercantile ships to sail. The main offering to the sea being the coconut, this day is known as *Nāraḷī Pourṇimā*, *nāraḷ* meaning coconut. To the agriculturist, this day is of special importance. On the Ghatside, the sister ties a *rākhī* on her brother's wrist. In the absence of the sister, a priest does the job. But more interesting are the wrestling matches, which are arranged on a very large scale. Prizes in the form of coconuts and *sāphās* are given to winners, Only in rare cases, cash or silver ornaments, like armlets and anklets are given away. It is not however, the money value of the prize so much as its prestige value that prompts the youths to prepare for and enter into the tournaments. Sometimes matrimonial alliances are arranged on the results of these tournaments. In Konkan, the agriculturist, instead of tying *rākhī* wears a *poute* round his neck or tied to his wrist. This is done at the village temple, generally at noontime. From this night, they assemble for practising their *Govindā* and *Gourī* dances, the former only a week and the latter slightly over a fortnight ahead.

*Gokulāshtamī* falls on the eighth day of the dark half of Shrāvaṇ. It is observed practically by all classes of Hindus all over India. The birth of Lord Krishna according to the *Purāṇas* took ploce exactly at midnight on this day. The period and the manner of celebrating this occasion vary from place to place according to the prominence this god is given in the village and the enthusiasm and the means of the people. In some villages of Konkan the celebrations start from the first day of the dark half and end on the ninth, while in some other villages they bigin on the eighth and end on the twelth of the dark half. In certain other places they start on the fifth and come to a close on the day following the birthday. In many places on the Ghatside, it is only a one day function.

When it is a function lasting for more days than one, *kīrtan* is generally one of the items. The life of Krishna is naturally the main theme. Slightly before midnight on the eighth a miniature cradle, decorated with garlands and other things is hung in front of the *kīrtankār*. Exactly at midnight Lord Krishna is believed to have been born. A symbolic representation of the newly born child, generally a coconut covered with a costly piece of cloth in the fashion of a baby, is put in the cradle. The *kīrtankār* sings lullaby songs, and the display of *goph* and *ṭiprī* dance, wherever organised follows.

Whatever variations regarding the beginning, the duration or the manner of celebrating this festival be, observing the birthday exactly at midnight and breaking the *handī*, an earthen pot full of curds, milk etc., decorated with a garland, on the following day is a common feature. Curds, milk, butter-milk, *pohā*, turmeric, mangos, mango sprout, coconut, plantains and some coin are, usually, the contents of a *handī*. It is hung in a temple or a prominent place at a respectable height, generally beyond the reach of a man standing on the shoulder of another. The time of breaking the *handī* is not fixed. It varies from dawn to dusk, according to the custom of the place.

Women have no active part to play throughout the function except of being the spectators. But their

presence has a contribution to make inasmuch as it acts as an incentive, when the youths give demonstrations of their physical strength, skill and stamina. Grown up men naturally do not participate in such activities, but they find it difficult to check the temptation of mixing in the group when the *kālā* dance begins. On some plea or the other, or under the pretext of being dragged in and forced to join, they enjoy the crude dance forgetting the decorum that attaches to age or status.

With the breaking of the *handī* the ceremony in the temple comes to a close and people go back to their respective homes, not forgetting to take with them a small piece of the broken pot. It is supposed to have the power of increasing the supply of milk and milk products and is therefore preserved in the place where these things are kept. In certain villages, after the main function at the temple is over, people pay a home-to-home visit where buttermilk and warm and cold water are poured on them while they are dancing.

On Ghatside, the function is not so elaborate. Of course, people do celebrate the birthday at midnight, orthodox persons observing a fast for the whole day, as in Konkan. But instead of the *kālā* dances as we have in Konkan, these people, young and old act as if they are possessed. The *bhagat* beats himself with his whip and at times even beats others. When they get exhausted, the *handī* is smashed.

*Gaṇesh Chathurthī* is, as the name suggests, a day dedicated to Ganesh. It is the fourth day of the bright half of Bhādrapad. Ganpati is one of the most important deities of the Hindu pantheon. He is famous as the remover of obstacles. Naturally, therefore, he is invoked at the beginning of every religious ceremony. Just a few years back, even children, when they were first introduced to alphabet were made to learn *Shrī Gaṇeshāyanamaḥ* meaning 'obeisance to God Ganpati.' In removing the existing obstacles and destroying the impending ones, there is no other deity in the whole Hindu pantheon to compete with him. It is no wonder then, that his idol is brought ceremoniously every year on this day in every Hindu family in Maharashtra. There are however few exceptions. This idol is to be immersed the very next day or at the most it can

be kept till *Anant Chaturdashī* the fourteenth day of the first half of Bhādrapad. Such families as have Ganpati as their family deity do not bring the idol, because it has got to be immersed sooner or later during the month. If they bring in the idol they will have to immerse it and thus they will have to go without their family deity for the rest of the year i. e. for the eleven months to come.

As a rule the idol of Ganpati is brought and worshipped on the fourth day and immersed on the very next day. But an enthusiast or a well-to-do person may keep it over a longer period. In that case it is either immersed along with the *Gourīs* on the *Gourī visarjan* day or on the *Anant Chaturdashī* day.

Formerly, the festival was a family concern; now it has become a public function as well. The idol is brought ceremonially, generally covered with a piece of costly cloth, on the very day, or at the most a day earlier if the artist who makes the idol happens to be a little way off. The idol is received at the house with all the ceremonies prescribed for the reception of a distinguished guest. A place specially decorated is reserved for it. A variety of fruits edible or otherwise is conspicuously attached to a wooden frame, hanging at a height of about six feet. The idol is worshipped with the help of a Brahmin priest. Sweetmeats are prepared, specially *modaks*, the favourite dish of the deity. Persons of orthodox views will not take their meals unless they have visited twenty-one idols. The number twentyone has, it should be remembered in this connection, a special affinity for the deity. The *modaks* offered, the *durvās*[1] with which it is specially worshipped are twenty-one or multiples of twenty-one. The whole day and night is spent in making merry. A well-to-do man invites his friends and acquaintances, perhaps all the people of his caste to play or sing *bhajans*. Formerly boys used to have their *tiprī* and *goph* dances. The immersion ceremony in some villages has been and is still collective. All the idols in a particular locality are taken to a temple or a place, where it is customary to meet on this occasion. A common *āratī* and prayer is sung and after distributing the *prasād* the idols are immersed along

1. Agrostis linearis.

with the *shidorī* in a tank, river or the sea.

Things have now slightly changed. The enthusiasm of the people appears to have worn out, due mostly to the weakening of faith and the increasingly hard life. Another cause is perhaps the advent of *sārvajanik Gaṇpatis*–a common idol for the inhabitants of a locality—which came in vogue some 30 years back at the instance of the late Lokamanya B. G. Tilak, the renowned political leader of India. In towns and cities the idea has taken root and we find today a number of such Ganpatis. Originally Tilak intended to utilize this opportunity for enlightening the public on topics political and religious, especially the former. Now, however, it is mostly serving the purpose of entertainment. Excepting the trunk and the prominently bulging belly, the dress and the paraphernalia of the idol have also been undergoing a drastic change. As a matter of fact, the idol in this connection has become the victim of the fancy of its worshippers. Whereas, formerly the idol was shown with a mouse by the side as its *vāhana* or vehicle, conforming to the description of Ganpati as occurs in the *Purāṇas*, he is shown today as riding a bicycle, driving a motor car or an aeroplane. His head-dress has undergone a number of changes. Right from his crown of different shapes and sizes, he has reached the stage of visiting his so-called devotees, bare-headed with a fine crop, In the days of great political movements, one would find him wearing a Gandhi cap and a Nehru shirt and spinning at the *charkhā*. He is becoming more and more the emblem or rather the expression of the dominating sentiment of his devotees.

*Meḷās* which have taken the place of *ṭiprī* and *gophi* parties are a prominent feature in such public Ganpati festivals. *Meḷā* is a troupe of boys, girls or of both who give a performance of dialogues based on some problem of immediate interest social or political, but mostly the latter. Demonstration of physical feats, singing and amateur artistic individual dancing are other attractions utilized to make the perfomances popular. Some *meḷās* are specially organised for the propaganda of certain political parties. Some are tending to be businesslike.

Vocal music by some prominent artiste is another attraction of the festival. Magical performances, mimicry and ballad singing come next. And lastly in the order of interest shown by the people come the lectures, which were originally meant to occupy a prominent place. There is hardly any scope for folk-dancing of any type, since the organisers of such public functions are persons belonging to advanced literate classes and, as such, apathetic to folk-dancing. It is only in rare cases that we find the procession at the time of immersion accompanied with *lezim* dancers.

With the agriculturists, specically of the Konkan area, the case is quite different. They spend most of the day in dancing before the Ganpati of the hamlet. If they are invited by upper class people, they are ever willing to give their dancing performance. On the Ghatside, *lezim* is prominently seen when the idols are taken in procession for immersion. Feats of physical skill and strengh like *malkhāmb*, the sword-fight and even balancing on parallel bars are demonstrated in the streets. The *malkhāmb* and the parallel bars are placed in bullock carts. Young boys painted like tigers and called *Wāghs* are a common sight. The processions are invariably accompanied by parties of musicians which act as incentive and provide a good back-ground and accompaniment for the display of physical activities.

*Haritālikā* : The idols of Sati and Parvati known as *Haritālikās* are worshipped on the third day of Bhādrapad by married higher caste women every year. Girls and widows do not offer worship but, all the same, they observe fast like the worshippers. *Phugadī* is played by some, but the enthusiasm for and the glamour about such activities which is so manifest at the time of *māngalāgour* is totally absent.

*Gouri*. No festival is more enthusiastically observed by the agricultural classes of Konkan than the *Gouripūjan*. Their energies which lay dormant from the *Shimgā* festival, are now concentrated towards and expended for the incoming festival of Gouri which occurs within a couple of days after the second day of the Ganpati festival. It is a three day function as can be seen from the almanac. The first day is

*Souryāvāhan*, the invitation to Gouri, second one is *Gourī-pūjan*, the worship of the goddess and the last day is *Gourī-visarjan*', the immersion day.

The representation of Gouri amongst these people is rather elaborate. They place a bundle of *terdā* plants on a chair, dress it in a saree and adorn it with ornaments. The head is made of clay properly shaped, dried and coloured. Poor people who cannot afford to buy this head, use a paper-image as a substitute. Rich people have sometimes the whole image made of clay. At the time of immersion, however, the bundle of *terdā* plants and the paper image only are immersed.

All the three days of the festival ( specialy the second day ) are spent in singing, dancing and drinking. Dancers pay house to house visits, as there must be a dance performance before the goddess in each house. Toddy is provided by the well-to-do and nowadays tea, by the poor, Men and women equally enjoy the festival. There is however no mixed dancing. Women have their own dances and songs and they do not dance while men are dancing. The procession of immersion, which generally takes place at about sunset, is invariably accompanied by dancing. Son Kolis, the fishermen of Konkan, also observe this festival more or less in the same fashion as their neighbour, the Kunbi.

The higher caste Hindus of Konkan, bring seven pebbles from the river or the sea, worship and immerse them on the prescribed days. This is generally done by young girls as it is not considered a very important festival by them, Same is the case with all the classes on the Ghatside.

*Sarvapitrī* : The last day of Bhādrapad is the *Sarva-pitrī amāvāsyā*. It is observed not only by the higher caste Hindus and the agriculturists, but also by the so-called aborigines like the Thakurs and the Malhar Kolis. As the name indicates, it is a day dedicated to deceased ancestors, The way in which these ancestors are propitiated differs from caste to caste. Brahmins invite a Brahmin priest, worship and feed him to his heart's content, taking him to be the representative of their ancestors for the time being. Others have to be content with offering the Brahmin priest *shidhā*,

1 Impatiens balsamina.

i. e. uncoooked food, since cooked food at the hands of persons belonging to castes other than his own is forbidden to a Brahmin. Offering *pindas* at noon to the ancestors is however common to all. The *pindas* or *vādhī* as the offering is called by the Kunbi is placed on the roof of the house, so that crows might eat it. It is a common Hindu belief that the ancestors visit their house in the form of crows.

During night, Brahmins used to have *mantrajāgars* chanting of Vedic *hymns* on this occasion. Well-to-do persons belonging to agricultural classes invite their caste people for a dance. For hill-tribes like the Malhar Kolis Warlis, Thakurs and the Katkaris dancing is essential on this day, in order to do homage to their ancestors.

*Mahālaxmī* is worshipped on the eighth day of the bright half of Āshwin. The rite is treated as important by the Chitpavans. Married women have to worship *Mahālaxmī* for five years. In the families, who have *Mahālaxmī* as their family-goddess, the idol of *Mahālaxmī* cannot be brought for reasons analogous to those stated in connection with the worship of Ganpati. Yet women from such families have to worship the goddess for five years. It is however, curious that in certain families the worship is tabooed.

As a rule, the *Mahālaxmī* is worshipped only at some one house in a village. In addition to the requisites of worship, women carry with them rice and pulse for their meals. Each woman must also carry with her the flour of a seer and a quarter of rice which is cooked and turned into sixteen small receptacles for holding ghee,and capable of serving as lamps. There is another fairly big-sized receptacle which is actually filled with ghee and is lighted at the time of meals. This is to be eaten by the worshipper after it is naturally extinguished but before she has finished her meals. She is also expected to consume all the small receptacles. If it is not possible, she takes them home and distributes them amongst children or feeds them to a cow. In no case are they to be given to anyone else. Each woman worships in the noon as many pebbles as the number of years she has completed from the time of her marriage. She also fastens round her wrist a silk thread with as many knots.

The idol of *Mahālaxmī* is prepared in the evening. The head is made from the cooked flour of rice, It is given a human shape and is adorned with ornaments and is dressed in a gorgeous saree. The idol is worshipped after sunset. The silk threads from the wrist are offered in worship and each worshipper is required to blow in an empty *ghāgar* at least five times. The blowing is called *ghāgar phunkaṇe* or *phunk ghālaṇe*. *ghāgar* being a round waterpot narrow at the neck. The idol is immersed the next morning in a well or tank nearby without much ceremony.

*Vijayā dashmī*. The tenth day of the bright half of Āshwin is one of the three and a half most auspicious days of the year. It is commonly known as *dasarā*. The day is considered auspicious for starting military expeditions from ancient times; and Hindus have, from time to time, marched against their enemies on this very day *Sīmollanghan*, i. e. crossing the boundry (of the village), symbolizes the ancient practice.

*Dasarā* is described as a big festival, wherein there is no dearth of joy and bliss and it is true for very good reasons. People have sumptuous meals at noon and all use their best attire. Towards evening people generally belonging to the same caste gather together to worship *shamī*[1], or, in its absence, the *āptā*[2] tree. On this day the leaves of *āptā* are supposed to symbolize gold, and are exchanged while greeting one another. Rich and poor, young and old, there is no distinction. All are on a footing of equality. These leaves are supposed to have come in one's possession as a result of plunder, an adjunct of victory, and as such their acquisition is restricted to men. After exchanging greetings with persons of their own sex, men make it a point to visit their relatives of the other sex and offer them a part of their 'booty.'

On the Ghatside, there is in some places, a display of handling war-weapons. The favourite wrestling bouts, technically known as *phads* are not missed. Just as the Katkari shall miss no opportunity of dancing, so the inhabitant of Ghat shall not miss an occasion for wrestling. In

1. Prosopis spicigera. 2. Bauhinia racemosa.

Konkan, however, we do not come across any such activities on this day though the people are equally skilful in, and fond of the display of, handling war-weapons.

*Divāḷī* is the longest and the most enjoyed festival of the Hindus. The principal days of the festival are the last three days of Ashwin and the first two days of Kārtik. The barn by this time is full and the housewife utilizes this opportunity to exhibit her skill in the culinary art. A number of small oil-lamps are lighted in every house, and even by the side of the street in front of one's house, if one can afford to do so. Paper-lanterns of various sizes and designs with suitable colour schemes are prepared in advance. On Ghatside, children are busy in erecting miniature forts in the compounds of their houses.

Of the five days, *naraka chaturdashī*, the fourteenth day of the dark half of Ashwin, is the most important one since this day is considered as the *divāḷī* day by all classes. Importance of other days differs in various groups. *Dhanatrayodashī* and *Laxmīpūjan* the thirteenth and the last day of Āshwin respectively are of special importance to the merchant classes, as they have their *vahīpujan*—worship of account books—on the former day and *Laxmipūjan*—the worship of the goddess of wealth—on the latter. This class is busy with stock-taking and accounts because, as a rule, a merchant's new year begins with the first day of Kārtik. *Bhāūbīj*, the second day of Kārtik is considered more important by the Brahmins and others claiming that status. On this day the brother visits his sister, generally at her house. and by way of present offers her cash, a fine piece of cloth or an ornament according to his means. *Balipratipadā* the first day of Kārtik is of great importance to the members of hill tribes. This is their last day of the season as such for dancing.

Thakurs and Katkaris hold dance competitions on this day, inviting their bretheren from neighbouring hamlets to participate. This is supposed to be held in honour of and as a *navas* to Kartikswami, the son of Shiva and Parvati. Turbans are given as prizes. The price of turbans varies from annas eight to rupees five. They are given according

to the merit and skill displayed by the various groups. There is the village-headman, and *panchas* (umpires or judges) who decide and their decision is seldom questioned. To judge the merit in this competition is not very difficult. Questions are put either plain or in songs by a party or by the *panchas* to other competing groups. The order of merit is decided on the number of questions a party has been able to solve. Sufficient time is allowed to the groups for consultations. The party outdoing all others is naturally entitled to the highest prize, i. e. the most costly turban. The competition starts from about ten at night and may last even up to ten the next morning.

The village which holds this competition has to provide the guests with meals, tea, tobacco and betel-leaves. The expenses are met from subscription from amongst the residents of the inviting village. To hold such a competition, which is considered a great honour, the village has to incur an expenditure of 50 to 100 rupees according to the number of groups invited. If there are more competitions than one to be held in the same area, days other than *Balipratipadā* are chosen and announcement is made to that effect sufficiently in advance. Groups from the surrounding area, generally within the radius of 12 or at times 16 miles participate. The number of participants in a group varies from eight to forty.

*Tripurī pourṇimā*, the full-moon day of Kārtik marks the beginning of *kālā* or *jatrā* performances, a form of *Dashāvatārs*. This should not be confused with the *kālā* dance of the *Gokulāshtmī* festival, though the name is identical and the breaking of *hāndī*, common. There are parties like dramatic companies, who give their performances at fixed places on fixed days and are invited by persons, some of whom even get Government grants for this purpose. This type of *Dashāvatār* is chiefly in vogue in the southern part of Ratnagiri district. On Malvan side, the members of *dahīkālā* or *jatrā* parties, locally known as *Dashāntris* belong generally to the Devali caste. This restriction is not very strictly followed, specially when adequate number of actors from that class is not forthcoming. The actor performing the role of Krishna

is invariably a member of the Brahmin class, as he is to break the *handī*— a pot full of curds, milk etc., which is supposed to be a sacred act and as such to be performed by a member of the sacred caste. The programme starts at about 10 p. m. and it is conventional that it must terminate at day-break with the breaking of *handī*. On Sangameshwar side these people are known as *khele*. The performances may continue till the advent of the rainy season though the peak period is over by the beginning of Chaitra.

On the Ghats, this is known as *bohādā* or *ākhāḍī* and the season begins from Māgh, when the harvesting is over. Generally, it lasts upto the end of Jyeshṭha, i. e., the beginning of the rainy season. There is, however, no specific caste giving such performances as in Konkan. All caste Hindus take active part in the performances. At some places, the casts of various incarnations are hereditary. In some villages, there is a keen competition for securing certain roles, as it is considered an honour. Nor is it a one-day performance as in Konkan. It lasts for days together, the duration varying from five to thirty days, according to the calibre, capacity and economic condition as well as the necessary enthusiasm of the inhabitants of the place.

*Holī* is one of the biggest and the last festival of the year according to the Hindu calendar. Bonfires are lit from the tenth day of Phālgun, but the principal day is the full moon day, when there is a big bonfire, which is worshipped with the help of a priest. A dancing boy in a female garb and accompanied by the members of his dancing party, lights the bonfire on completing three circumambulations round it. A newly-cut plantain tree with plantains is placed at the centre in the bonfire. A cock is also sacrificed to the bonfire in some places. Coconuts are also offered and are removed after they are roasted and distributed as *prasād*. Everybody present is expected to circumambulate the bonfire and uttering the term for female genitalia makes a sound like 'bo bo bo' by striking the back of his palm against his lips.

*Dhūlīvandan*, better known as *dhulvad* means obeisance to dust and is observed on the next day. People move in

groups throwing dust or coloured powder on each other as well as on those who pass by.

*Rangapanchamī*, the fifth day of the dark half of Phālgun is the last day of the *shimgā* festival. It is celebrated by throwing liquids of different colours on each other and everybody tries to make everybody else the victim of his syringe.

Excepting the Brahmins and a few other advanced castes, all castes indulge in the various *shimgā* dances. The peculiarity about these dances is that each locality in a village does not form a separate dancing party, but the dance is taken to be the concern of the village as a whole. These dances are held in honour of the village deities. The dancing parties are named after their villages. They visit neighbouring villages and give a house-to-house performance for which they receive a pice at each home; and they are content with it even in these hard days. Money is no consideration; even the little amount that is collected goes to the common fund of the deity. As a matter of fact, the participants have to spend money from their own pockets to meet their expenses. It is the religious sentiment and tradition, coupled with the joy and exhileration they derive from participation that prompts them on the occasion to spend their time which is always valuable to an agriculturist or a labourer, and their money which they seldom have in plenty.

*Shimgā* dances are neither so popular nor so adundant on Ghatside as in Konkan. Bhils and Lamans are perhaps the only tribes that have *shimgā* dances. The latter are restricted to a few settlements in Sholapur district and their genuine domicile in Maharashtra is often questioned while the former are found mostly in West Khandesh. In Belgaum district, people organize a procession of *Kāmannā* the Cupid god. Men painted and dressed as tigers and lions are a peculiar feature. *Lezim* parties accompany the procession. There is an exhibition of physical feats, such as holds on *Malkhāmb* and parallel bars. On the whole, the major portion of Ghatside has very few *shimgā* dances as compared with Konkan. During the *shimgā* festival, in any village or town in Konkan. one is sure to come across a number of dancing parties. On Ghats, on the other hand, one has to

search for them. Even in Konkan, however, the enthusiasm for these dances, if not exactly fast disappearing, is definitely on the decline. The crowds one used to see twenty years back are becoming thinner and thinner every year. Certain dances are even getting extinct.

Excepting in the Lamans, the Bhils and the Malhar Kolis, women do not participate in *shimgā* dances.

**Special occasions**.

So far I have dealt with the regular occasions for dancing occuring through the course of a year. I shall presently describe some other incidental occasions, like birth, marriage, sickness, death and drought, when some type of dancing is indulged in.

In certain Chitpavan families, it is obligatory to perform *bodan*, after a birth or a marriage has taken place in the family. Four married women and an unmarried girl are invited to meals. A metal idol of the goddess *Annapūrṇā* is placed in a plate containing all the items of the meals in small quantities. All the contents of the plate along with the idol are mixed together by the invited women and if any one of them is in the habit of getting possessed on such occasions, or if anyone gets possessed for the first time, ghee, milk, honey etc., are added to the mixture according to her instructions. The idol is afterwards removed and the mixture is fed to a cow.

In certain Deshastha Brahmin families and even in certain others belonging to other castes, *gondhaḷ* is a necessary adjunct to a marriage ceremony. *Gondhaḷīs* are professionals and they perform *gondhaḷs* for which, they receive their customary dues.

After the return of the bridal couple to the bridegroom's place and in some castes earlier at the time of the procession, the bride and the groom are lifted on shoulders by some near relative and are danced. This custom is still prevalent amongst castes other than the Brahmins. Though it is now getting obsolete, there are some Deshastha Brahmins who have seen the bride and the groom of their caste

danced after *varāt*. The dancing is known as *dhende nāchavīne*.

At the time of *rukhvat* amongst the Marathas on Ghat-side, women dance, and while dancing, try to redicule and belittle the other side.

*Ākhāḍā*. In Konkan, especially in the northern part of Ratnagiri district, all marriage processions of well-to-do non-Brahmins are generally accompanied by *ākhāḍās*. *Ākhāḍā* is a party of persons, skilled is performing feats of physical skill, strength and stamina. They give at prominent places the performances of sword-dance, *lāṭhī* fighting, etc. *Lezim* dance is indulged in all the way and is only discontinued when other feats are being demonstrated. If there are *ākhāḍās* from both the parties, there is a very keen competition, each one trying to outdo the other.

The fisherwomen (*Son Koḷīs*) of Konkan dance on the *manḍap* day, which is generally a couple of days before the marriage day, during night, both at the bride's place and at the bridegroom's place. They also dance during night on the *haḷad* day, the day previous to the marriage day, and on the marriage day. The next day after marriage they have a dance during day-time known as *pāyawāṭ kāḍhaṇe*—finding out a path—and also at the time of *varāt* which is usually at night.

*Bhagats* are the shamans of Maharashtra and are found everywhere. As a rule, they are not Brahmins and belong to various castes or tribes. Irrespective of their caste, they work for anybody that approaches them. They are generally consulted at the time of sickness or some other calamity, where the cause is unknown. The *bhagat* is supposed to possess the power of divination and is also employed when one wants to do harm to one's enemy or to make the enemy's magic recoil on him.

On Ghatside, these *bhagats* have special huts for the purpose of divination known as *maḍhī*. In this hut are a few deities in the form of oval-shaped stones besmeared with vermilion. His other paraphernalia is also kept there. On prescribed days, he is possessed and while in trance answers questions and solves problems put to him.

There is a marked difference in the powers possessed by different *bhagats*. Some are supposed to be more powerful than others. The magic of a *bhagat* can be counteracted only by those of his class who are more powerful than him. *Bhutālīs* are witches supposed to be less powerful than the *bhagats*.

There is a type of women shamans in Konkan who are supposed to be possessed by the presiding deity over small-pox. As such they are specially consulted for guidance when the small-pox epidemic is rampant.

Nearabout Malvan, in addition to *bhagats*, there are persons who get possessed and who are consulted in case of sickness. They carry with them a long pole at the top of which there is an artistically dressed idol with a metal-head. The pole is also called *dev or tarang* and is believed to inspire those who get possessed.

Among classes that employ *Kumbhārs* or *Kāmadīs* for performing the obsequies, the former by his dancing and the latter by his singing, invoke the spirit of the dead in a medium, who is generally a near relative of the deceased. When the medium gets possessed it gives out the unfulfilled wishes of the dead.

On the Ghatside, if a man dies in a fight or by accident, a stone is buried in his name under a banian tree on the following *Akshaya tritiyā* or *Sankrānt* day whichever is earlier. The males from the family of the deceased are anointed with turmeric powder, collyrium is put in their eyes and they are dressed in fine clothes. These people hold swords in their hands. They dance round the stone, while it is being taken to its destination. They are known as *virs*.

In Nasik district, people who have got metal imprints in the name of their ancestors amongst the idols of gods called *tānk* take these imprints in a copra-half covered with a kerchief to the important temple of the place at night, performing a kind of war-dance. Formerly they were dressed in a tight pyjama and a gown with belt. They also used to put on ornaments of women. Jingling bells were tied to either feet. They used to have a sword in the right hand. Nowadays they wear women's *pitāmbar*—a silk garment, in the

fashion of a pyjama and put on a blouse. The head-dress namely *sāphā* is the same as before. In the absence of a sword, they use a staff. There are certain *vīrs* who get possessed. They are known as *Navasāche vīr*. Other *vīrs* start by evening but these are taken in a procession at night. Women bearing no issue specially pray to them for an issue.

In case of drought, on Ghatside naked children belonging to lower castes tie twigs of *nīm* tree to their persons, take an earthen pot with them and go dancing from house to house. They are given some corn, and water is poured on them. They proceed to the outskirts of the village and after breaking the earthen pot return.

In Konkan, the Malhar Kolis put some oil in a lamp made of rice-flour and light it. They dance round this lamp and if the oil happens to come outside the receptacle, they feel confident that the rains would follow suit.

Amongst the Chitpavans while the image of God in a temple, generally of Mahadev is being completely kept under water, or is incessantly being sprinkled with water, people sing *bhajans* and at times dance while singing those *bhajans* when drought is feared.

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# III

## MOVEMENTS AND FORMATIONS

### The *dindi* dance.

The dance on the *Ekādashi* day in Āshāḍh or in Kārtik is known as *dinḍi*. The word *dinḍi* means a wicket-gate as also a banner with a figure of the Sun or Hanuman on it. One of the participants informed me that the dance derives its name not so much from the latter meaning of the word as the former, though he admitted that such banners are conspicuous in the dance. He, however, maintained that the former meaning is more appropriate in as much as, the efficacy of the dance lies in opening the gates of heaven. Principal S. V. Dandekar of the S. P. College, Poona, himself a staunch devotee of the *vārkari* cult and an authority on this matter agrees with none of the explanations offered above, though he admits the meanings of the term. He maintains, that *dinḍi* is the name of a particular musical instrument similar to the *viṇā*, but the term has a wider application in the *vārkari* cult. It connotes not the instrument but the group that follows the player on that instrument. It must be remembered that there is only one player, who plays on this instrument in a *dinḍi* dance. This explanation appears to be quite plausible as well as satisfactory.

The participants generally fall in two rows facing one another. The *mridang* player and the *viṇā* player, who lead the dance are in between the rows. The strings of the *tāḷs* are interlocked which keeps them compact and in position.

The movements are not complicated. Since the *dinḍi* is danced while going to the temple, the movements must naturally tend to progress in a line. With the click of the *tāḷs* the participants advance with the right foot forward, stamping it slightly on the ground and simultaneously bending

at the waist, making such an angle as conveniently brings the hands just in front of the knees which are also slightly flexed. While the right foot is still on the ground, they slide a short sideward step with the left foot, a few inches towards the direction they are moving. When the left foot is thus brought in contact with the ground the right one is taken a full step to the rear. At this time they are more or less in an erect posture, the *tāḷs* marking the step, being clicked just in front of the waist and not in front of the knees as in the advance step. The bending of the trunk at the advance step becomes less emphasised as the participants become exhausted.

**The *kālā* dance.**

The dance coming on the day next to *Gokuḷashtamī* is known as *kālā* or *dahikālā* or *dahihanḍī*, The word *kālā* means 'bread, rice etc. mixed with curds.' The dance is an imitation of one of the important aspects of the early life of Lord Krishna, when he was living in *Gokuḷ* the cowherd settlement. He and his comrades used to steal milk and milk-products from the houses of the neighbouring milk-women in the *Gokuḷ*, eat and drink to their heart's content and smear bodies with what remained. Even today, parched and flattened rice-*pohā*, mixed with curds are distributed as *prasād* and some quantity is thrown on the dancers along with buttermilk, curds, etc. *Hanḍī* containing curds, milk etc., is ceremoniously broken on this occasion. The name of the dance, thus, appears to be fully significant and appropriate.

When the group after breaking the *hanḍī* at the main temple or place marches off in a file, through different localities of the village, dancing and singing, it is known as *Govindā* because the participants cry aloud '*Govindā*' which is one of the names of Krishna.

The crudest and the most common form of Maharashtrian dance is the *kālā* dance. The advanced Chitpavan dancing in his own exclusive group shows, on this occasion, as much zeal as is shown by the Thakur, dancing amongst his own people. There is no regular formation whatsoever, throughout the dance, though the dance continues well-nigh over a couple

of hours. The only exception is at the time of breaking the *handī*, when a pyramidical formation becomes necessary. This formation is also very simple. A batch of selected strong persons stand in a circle, arms interlocked over the shoulders so as to form a firm solid base. On the shoulders of these stands another batch, of course a smaller one, of smart and active young men. Over the shoulders of the second batch a smart lad finds his way up and at this stage he is in a position to reach the *handī*. If the *handī* is still out of reach, another tyre is formed. While the *handī* is being broken, the whole formation is and has to be steady, but as soon as it is over all climb down without order and the formation collapses. The whole group with renewed vigour resumes the *kālā* dance, which generally terminates after a short time.

The movements, as I have already stated, are very crude. The participants place their arms on the shoulders of neighbours and slide and stamp their feet on the ground. Everyone tries to get under the water or buttermilk that is being poured over them. Consequently the whole group shifts. At times a few strong and stout men squat on the ground with their heads bent and covered with their arms, thus forming a solid base. which becomes the centre of the dance. Other members of the group dance over the bodies of these persons without any sort of constraint. The experience of the persons squatting, is not, however, painful as may be expected. On the contrary they feel exhilerated as they get a good massage. In rare cases they feel it overdone, but even then, their complaint is just about a few muscle cramps, and seldom goes beyond that.

When the group is not in a mood to form a compact body, in addition to the stamping and sliding movements of the feet, the swinging of the hands backward and forward in a rathar jerky manner is added. But this is rare. In most cases, the group moves in a compact body.

When the participants, start in a procession to visit different localities and to break the *handīs* that they may come across, they fall in a line more or less straight and are linked in a chain either by clasping palms or hooking arms with their neighbours. They dance the distance, keeping the right foot forward and stepping with the same foot, while

the left foot is dragged to make up the necessary space. The leaders, and, at times a few others, have wooden clubs in their hands which they occasionally whirl in the air.

### The *tiprī* and *goph* dances.

These names are obviously given because of the prominence of *tipris* and *goph* in these dances. Excepting the addition of *goph* there is no material differennce in the movements and formation of the two dances though the spectacular effect of the latter is decidedly superb.

There are various formations, some of which can clearly be discerned in various patterns of the *goph*, when it is properly executed. There are generally four, six or eight pairs participating in this dance. They stand in a circle, the members of the pairs facing each other. In another formation, one from each pair kneels inside the circle, facing outward, while his partner stands opposite to him. In a third formation, each pair or a couple of pairs as the case may be takes its stand at the four different quarters all facing the centre. In a fourth one, half the participants stand in a circle one behind the other and the remaining half stand near them in a similar position but with their faces turned in the opposite direction. The halves are formed by selecting one from each pair for each half. In a fifth one, they stand in opposite rows or in a single file and manipulate different marching formations of twos, fours and the like. Each one of the participants has two small coloured sticks in his two hands, which are called *tiprīs*.

The movements, however, do not vary to a great extent in these different formations. The participants have to strike the *tiprīs* which are to be coordinated with the beat of the *tablā* or the cymbal and thus arm movements are to a great extent restricted. Usually they strike one beat with their own pair of *tiprīs*, the one in the right hand being struck upon the other in the left. Alternately they strike one or both the *tiprīs* against those of their partner, or whoever happens to meet them while moving. Sometimes the *tiprīs* are carried over the head or below the knee in order

to make an exhibition of skill. The beats are followed in various combinations so that change dispels monotony and adds to effect. In the case of *goph*, which consists of an appropriate number of coloured ribbons hung from one centre overhead, everyone holds the end of one ribbon in the left hand along with the *ṭiprī*. The dance consists in plaiting the ribbons into a braid and unwinding it.

The trunk movement is not prominent. Only in some villages have I seen the participants bending. When they strike their *ṭiprīs* against each other they bend, and while striking against that of their partner, they raise themselves nearly to their full stature. This movement is very much similar to the trunk movement of the *dinḍī* dance.

The foot-work is perhaps more prominent. The leg movements are generally step and skip, which have to be coordinated with the beat of the stick, since generally *chāḷs* are tied to the feet and wrong timing, if not a wrong step, is sure to break the harmony. The participants have to be very particular in their footwork because at a given signal they have to change direction and even in high speed they have to check and turn to opposite directions. In the *goph* dance conditions are more complicated than in the other. In *ṭiprī* dance people may not detect a mistake, but in *goph* dance, a mistake in dancing is obvious even to a layman as it impedes smooth unfolding of the *goph*.

## Gouricha or Gouri-Ganapaticha nach.

The dance performed in honour of Gouri and Ganpati is known as *Gourī—Gaṇpatīchā nāch*. The term signifies nothing beyond its literal meaning. It simply means a dance performed in honour of Gouri and Ganpati. This dance is in some places known as *Cheulī nāch*. Probably the name is derived from Cheul, a village in Kolaba district at the creek of the same name. It is also known as *jākhaḍī* which means (i) that which binds together, and (ii) a riddle. From the nature of the dance and from the contents of the dance-songs, both the meanings can be said to be correct, since the dance

binds together all the members of the group both socially and physically and again when there are competing groups, one party introduces in songs a riddle, which the other group is expected to solve. The latter interpretation, however, appears to be more plausible, since they always use the phrase '*jākhaḍī mhaṇā*,' meaning thereby sing a *jākhaḍī*.

The usual formation is a circular one and the dancers fall in a well-described circle. Their starting position of standing closely one behind the other helps them to maintain the circular form in tact. The *mridang*-player as well as the cymbal-player take their position at the centre and generally squat on the ground. At the time of Gouri immersion they go dancing along the road in a line, arm in arm, *mridang* and cymbal players leading.

At the start the dancers stand facing the centre with the left foot forward and the right foot to the rear, the distance between the feet being hardly a foot. Turning slightly to the right, they take a step forward in an anti-clockwise direction with the right foot, the left one following. In this movement they move along the circumference, each following the one in front rather closely. The movement of the right hand is prominent, which is swung forward nearly to the level of one's shoulder, while the left one is for the most time idle. After a line of a song is sung by the leader and repeated in chorus by the group, they take a left-about turn, then a right-about turn with hands moving overhead in accordance with the direction of the turn. The other dominating movement, which even a casual observer does not miss is the sliding of a foot, usually the right one, forward and backward, while they are in s squatting position. This position is, however, getting out of vogue as pyjama and dhoti, which have driven out the former loin cloth get spoiled in the position.

The tempo of movements at the start is rather slow. The first line of a song is sung, rather slowly, twice by the leader, the timing for each step on the right foot being approximately one second. With the same timing it is repetaed in chorus. This is done twice when the speed of the step as well as that of the song is doubled, the song this time being sung and repeated in the same manner as before. Then they retrace

two steps back, facing the same direction and, taking a step forward, resume the slow tempo.

## *Dholacha nach*.

The drum (*dhol*) and the drummer are of major importance in a Thakur or a Katkari dance. It is the drum-beat that regulates the speed, sustains and promotes interest, keeps up spirit and adds to the vigour of the dance. It is proper therefore, that the dance should be termed the *dholāchā nāch*.

The formation of the dance is invariably a circular one. The dancers stand in a circle more or less compact, with feet six to eight inches apart, and the left foot slightly forward. The habit of forming a compact group which appears to have its origin in the limited space available to them in the hut has been so much ingrained in them that even if they are dancing in the open where space is ample, they still stick to each other. Their chaining also is peculiar and is prominently marked. They link themselves up in various ways : (1) by catching hold of the waist of the man in front with both arms, (2) by keeping one arm on the shoulder of the neighbour, (3) by putting both hands on the shoulders of the neighbour in front, (4) by hooking arms when facing outward or inward, or (5) by putting arms round the necks of their neighbours, when they face the centre and want to form a very compact group.

The movments also are varied. Standing in a circle, the dancers stamp their right foot towards the centre and then move along the circumference in a slow gliding pace in an anticlockwise direction. For sixteen counts they proceed with a slow rhythm, always keeping step with the beat of the drum. Then with the acceleration of the speed of the drum-beat, the movements become more and more vigorous till the climax is reached, when neither the drummer nor the dancers are able to maintain the rhythm at the high speed. With a sudden clap, simultaneously struck by all the participants the dance comes to a stop, to be renewed with a refreshed vigour and a new song after a couple of minutes' rest.

The movements of the dance are as below.

(1) Alternately changing steps on the same spot facing the centre.

(2) Resting on one foot and stamping the other on the ground keeping time with the beats of the drum.

(3) Squatting and slightly jumping on both feet and turning once to the right and once to the left with a clap.

(4) Moving sideways, jumping lightly in a squatting pose in both, clockwise and anticlockwise directions.

(5) Standing one behind the other and jumping like frogs in both directions.

(6) Cross-armed and with hands clasped to those of neighbours on either side, in a compact form, performing sideward jumping in either direction, and facing either inward or outward.

(7) Clapping and facing alternately towards opposite directions, and performing clockwise and anticlockwise movements.

(8) Practically resting on their palms and slightly raising and striking both the feet on the ground keeping time all along with the drum.

(9) Running with a furious speed as if hunting something and coming to a sudden stop with a yell.

(10) While engaged in frog-jump action, the dancers change from bending to squatting and, then, suddenly taking an about turn all get up and resume the erect posture.

(11) With palms on their knees and with feet together they jump lightly forward, backward and sideways.

(12) Raising their knees alternately, they clap underneath the knees.

(13) Raising the right leg up, they move in both the directions hopping only on the left foot and clapping overhead.

(14) With one hand on the ground and the other on the back of the neighbour in front, the dancers shift their feet sideways.

(15) Alternately hopping on one leg and crossing the other with a sudden jump, they squat at the centre, take an about turn and come back to their original position·

They have very few arm movements. The only move-

ment of the arm is marked at the time of the yells, when they are thrust out with full force over the head. Otherwise the hands are hanging loosely by the side. There is hardly any conscious arm movement excepting the one mentioned above.

They have practically no trunk and head movements. The bending position of the trunk is seen only when they change from an upright position to a squatting one.

## *Tarapi* Dances.

*Uḍakyāchā nāch.* *Uḍī*, in Marathi, means a jump, and the name signifies that jumping movement is prominent in the dance. The participants standing arm in arm and with right foot forward form an arc facing the *tārapī* player. They move to the right, as the *tārapī* is played, jumping lightly on the right foot and dragging the left one.

*Pāya pālaṭyāchā nāch.* The participants stand in a line in pairs with the *tārapī* player in front. Members of every pair face one another and hold each other's hands overhead. In this position they take a light jump by crossing legs, once the right and once the left. Instead of holding hands ovrheed they sometimes clap their hands overhead and alternately at the front. The name is significant in that *pāya pālaṭyāchā* means 'of crossing the legs.'

*Gunjavāyachā nāch.* The participants stand in an arc facing the *tārapī* player. Bending at the knee they act as if picking something from the ground and putting it on the head. There is no variation in action nor do the dancers leave their places.

*Bhāt bhālaṇyāchā nāch.* The participants stand in an arc facing the *tārapī* player. They keep the right foot forward and swaying their body backward, forward and sideward, move to the right. This is in imitation of the undulating standing paddy crop set in motion by a gentle breeze. *Bhāt* means paddy and *bhālaṇyāchā* means swaying.

*Lāvarīchā nāch.* The participants stand in a line, one behind the other. The *tārapī* player is nearby. Each one holds with hands the waist of the man in front and all move

forward briskly in a zigzag way imitating the movements of the *lāhurī* bird.

*Bhāng-tilyāchā nāch*. The participants stand in a line facing the *tarapī* player. With one hand on the hip, the thumb of the other is moved and placed on the forehead imitating the action of applying *tilā*. The hands are used alternately. Nobody leaves his place.

*Govāyachā nāch*. A pair of dancers stand facing each other with their hands crossed and interlocked. Another pair from among the participants who stand nearby comes running and stands in a similar position near the first pair, passing their hands through the arms of the former. This goes on till all the participants have joined the chain. The *tarapī* player plays nearby when the chain is being formed. *Govāyachā* means chaining.

*Salāmīchā nāch*. The participants stand in a line facing the *tarapī* player. They make a salaam using their hands alternately and simultaneously lifting the corresponding leg. Nobody leaves his place.

*Huraṇāchā nāch*. The participants stand in a line facing the *tarapī* player. They act as though they are warding off ants from their bodies, without leaving their places. Legs are lifted up one after another for the purpose. *Huraṇ* is an arboreal species of red ants.

*Māvalyāchā nāch*. The participants stand or sit without any specific order, in front of the *tarapī* player. They nod and act as though they are possessed like a *bhagat*, while the *tarapī* is being played.

*Bhui-phugaḍī*. This is identical with the *bas-phugaḍī* of the *mangalagour* dances. The dancing is done to the tune of the *tarapī* and by the process of elimination, the stamina of the participants is tested.

## Dashavatar or bohada

*Dashāvatārs* or *bohādā*, as we have already observed, may be called the folk-ballet of Maharashtra. The term *dashāvatār* means the ten incarnations of God Vishnu and the name is quite significant as many of the incarnations, if

not all, are presented on the stage in this folk-ballet.

The stage is an improvised one. A curtain is often held by two persons and is removed as the actors enter. The *sūtradhār* who announces the entry and the purpose of the incoming action, takes his stand on one side of the stage, leaving the major portion at the disposal cf the actors.

Strange as it may appear, even in celebrating the heroic deeds of these incarnations of Vishnu, the dieties Ganpati and Sarasvati are invoked by the *sūtradhār* at the beginning and these are the first to appear on the stage. This is peculiarly Maharashtrian.

The entry of Ganpati and Sarasvati at the beginning is thought to be a conventional necessity and all types of folk-ballet and folk-opera in Maharashtra invariably respect the tradition. The former is invoked because he is *vighna-hartā*, the remover of obstacles, and the latter is indispensable, being the goddess of learning.

There is however, no guiding rule or convention as to who should follow next. Local variations are innumerable, yet the deity which is favourite with the locality is given precedence and importance. The movements of the actors differ slightly from place to place. But below the variations there is a fundamental uniformity which is not difficult to detect.

On the Ghatside, persons who act the roles of different *avatārs*, deities and other characters do not always put on their costumes in a place adjoining the stage. In many cases this place is pretty well off. If the stage happens to be at one end of a lane, this place may even be at the other end. Even then, the enthusiasm of the actors is so great that they dance off the whole distance. They are of course accompanied by the musicians and naturally do not feel the strain so much as they would have otherwise felt. Ganpati, who is the first to enter has persons to assist him. His extra hands and his big trunk are unwieldy enough to need the services of assistants, especially when he has to come from a pretty long distance. He dances in a zigzag way with shuffling steps. When he reaches the stage, he dances there for a short time more or less in the same manner. He is

offered worship and in return he gives his blessings and returns to the same place from whence he had started, again dancing off the whole distance.

Then enters Sarasvati, the goddess of learning. As the peacock is her carrier, she tries to dance like a peacock. She is shown to be riding a peacock in three ways. In the first, an artificial peacock is tied round the waist of the dancer. This is cumbrous and restricts free movement. In the second method, an artificial peacock is held by the dancer in between his thighs which action, naturally, restricts foot-work all the more. In the third method, a peacock is made of *virale* and the body of the dancer is passed through a hole at its centre so as to keep it at his waist. This equipment is light and allows the maximum freedom of movement possible for dancer on a 'peacock.' She holds kerchiefs in her hands and waves them up and down making a fluttering movement. Her foot-work is brisk, in marked contrast to the slow but elegant movements of her elephaht-headed Lord.

The movements expressing heroic sentiment are stamping violently on the ground and pushing the arms in various directions in full force. When, for instance, Hiranyakashyapu enters the stage, he resorts to such movements for making his presence felt by the spectators. The sentiment of pathos shows naturally a contrast. The movements and action of the wife of Hiranyakashyapu are more subdued and subtle. The dramatic appearance of Nrisinha from the wooden post in his half-human, half-lion form, creates a sense of terror and the battle that ensues between Hiranyakashyapu and Nrisinha thrills the audience. The climax is reached at the terrible death which Hiranyakashyapu meets at the hands of Nrisinha.

So is the battle of Rama and Ravana. The indefatigable actors enter into all sorts of movments in wielding their weapons till they are literally bathed in perspiration. In some villages, I have found such fights going for more than an hour. In one instance they had to continue the fight for more than a couple of hours, since according to their belief Ravan must be slain exactly with the sunrise and not earlier.

## *Shimga* Dance

The *nakṭā* dance. Though there are three persons, the *nakṭā*, the *kolī* and the *koḷīn*, participating in the dancing movements, the name *nakṭā* meaning 'a snub-nosed' is given to the dance, because of the prominence attached to the mask and the dress of the *nakṭā* and because he figures as the most important dancer of the trio.

The three stand in a line, facing spectators, with left foot forward and in a stance position as if ready to attack. When beginning to sing a fresh line, without advancing or retreating, they slightly bend their knees and put their trunk and weight a little bit forward. When the line is being repeated, all the three advance a step and stamp the right foot forward, the left one not leaving the ground, but being slightly raised on the spot. They retreat, taking the right foot a full step to the rear and the procedure is repeated by the *koḷī* and the *koḷīn* all along except when they casually take an about-turn while retreating. The *nakṭā* also joins them in the movements when he has nothing better to do. His chief role however, consists in dramatising the incidents that are being sung. His movements naturally vary according to the theme. For example, while the first line in the first *nakṭā* dance-song is being sung he 'digs' the earth with his sword. He then describes the course of 'the spring' with his sword, while the second line is being sung. When the third line starts, he squats on the ground ready to take 'a bath' and keeping the sword aside uses his mock shield for a pot to take 'a bath' with. When the next line is being sung, he cuts asunder his sacred thread and throws it as a noose to catch 'fish' with. His movements are rather crude and he is not very particular about the nicety of form as his movements are not expected to create aesthetic effect of any high order. As a matter of fact, he is a mimic and many a time, he overdoes a thing, as it is an easy way of creating laughter. His aim being to create laughter, he resorts to humorous ways of presenting incidents occuring in different songs. He, however, does not miss any opportunity of frightening children, a traditionally recognized privilege. By his actions, he tries to frighten children, though

his fierce-looking mask is, by itself, enough fierce looking. With a shrieking yell of 'hoo--- oo' he unexpectedly swoops on children who take to their heels though their curiosity and the pleasure of waching the dance tempts them to get under the shelter of some elderly persons or to hide in some place nearby. In another action, he invariably strikes his wooden sword on his mock-shield, when the *koḷī* summarises the line that has just been sung and releases from his bow the arrow which never flies being fixed in the string, but strikes against the bow with a click. The actions of the two are simultaneous.

The *kāṭkheḷ* dance. The name is suggestive enough. It comes from *kāṭhī* a stick and '*kheḷ*' meaning play. It is a dance with sticks.

It is one of the picturesque dances of Maharashtra and admits a variety of movements. The formation, as a rule, is circular, members standing in pairs and facing each other. Only in *dāvaṇ* and *bhilkavḍā* they arrange themselves in two rows.

They move, generally, in an anti-clockwise direction, keeping time with a pair of *ṭiprīs* held in the hands. Some of the movements, though more vigorous and quick, resemble those of the *ṭiprī* dance. The difference in moving in circle is, however, striking. In rare cases the pairs in a *ṭiprī* dance move back to back. But in this dance the first round taken with a new line of song is invariably so. The beginning is always in a slow tempo and it has to be so, since they are moving back to back. When a line is being repeated, the speed increases and the movements also change. They take a zigzag course which naturally facilitates free movement. They once strike their sticks against each other and then strike them with those of the advancing member. At times they squat and turn about keeping time with their sticks to the beat of the drum. In *dāvaṇ* they move in a figure of eight. In *bhilkavḍā* they pass under one another, the arms being chained. It is very strenuous and practically the whole body is twisted in this performance.

*Koḷyāchā nāch*. literally means a fisherman's dance. Sonkolis, fishermen of the Konkan coast used to perform this

dance and even now it is current amongst them except those residing nearabout Bombay. Nowadays the Sonkolis roundabout Bombay protest against and disown this dance as it depicts their excessive drinking habit. It is a dance imitating a boat being rowed in the open sea.

The dancing members of the group stand side by side in two rows, excepting the *nākhavā*, the captain and the *Koḷīṇ*, the fisherwoman, who are in between the two rows. Placing the left hand on the hip and holding a kerechief in the right hand, which is swayed in accordance with the movements of the feet, the *Koḷīṇ* always makes a sideward movement slightly changing the direction each time, the feet while separating and coming together nearly brushing the ground. The *nākkavā* has a glass in the right hand and a bottle of 'liquor' in the left. He frequently pours out 'the liquor' from the bottle into the glass and drinks it off and on, and offers the same to the *Koḷiṇ* each time. He is, however, careful to pour the 'liquor' in small quantities as he is anxious to see that it lasts till the end of the show. He, at times, tries to co-ordinate his movements with those of the *Koḷīṇ* but he is more particular about his acting a drunkard.

The dancers, who form the two rows are, on the contrary, very particular about the uniformity of movement. It is a team work and more perfect it is more it is enjoyed by the spectators as well as by the participants. With the miniature oars in their hands they imitate the rowing of a boat, now in full swing, now in a lull. With their bodies swaying backwards and forwards in full unison, they create a plastic picture of a boat tossing on the waves of the sea.

The *ḍerā* dance. The dance derives its name from the big earthen pot used in the dance to produce a humming sound. A big earthen pot is known as *ḍerā* in Marathi.

The *gouḷaṇ* and the *nanda* stand side by side each holding a strip of a palm-leaf attached to the mouth of the *ḍerā*. These are the only persons who dance.

Their movements are few and simple. They move simultaneously once to the right and once to the left taking short sideward steps, and sliding their fingers on the palm

leaves so as to produce a vibrating sound, an action which naturally restricts their movement and formation.

The *Sankāsura* dance *Sankāsura* is the corrupt form of *Sankāsura*,the demon Shankha, who, according to the *purāṇas*, had stolen the Vedas. *Sankāsura* appears to be the representation of this demon. The mask he wears, resembles a *shankha*, a conch-shell, the bulging portion at the face and the long tapering head-dress giving an appearance of a conch -shell.

In some places, it is an individual dance, while in certain other places, it is a couple dance known as the *Rādhā* dance in which the female dancer represents Radha.

When the *Sankāsur* dances alone the movements are nothing but jumping higher and higher with feet together and giving out occasional yells, till he receives his customary dues, which seldom exceed a pice.

The *lezim* dance is the most important of the Maharashtrian folk-dances. It is peculiarly Maharashtrian and till very recently it was not even known outside the province, The name is derived from the chief instrument used in the dance-the *lezim*.

Many and varied are the formations used in this dance. One can even maintain, without exaggerating, that there is no formation in any of the other folk-dances of Maharashtra which is not included in this dance. This statement is fully justified when we see that not only the circular formations practised in *tiprī*, *goph*, *kāṭkheḷ* and other dances are found in this dance, but also other formations like marching in a file, in twos, in fours, then forming different circles and reverting to the original position with ease and grace.

This dance admits a variety of movements- skipping, stepping, squatting, bending, hopping, throwing the head up, etc. The arm-movements are naturally restricted, both the arms being engaged in manipulating the various strokes of the *lezim*. Every movement is performed in unison with the strokes of *lezim*, which are done to perfect timing. The *lezim* by itself thus provides the necessary rhythmical music, though more often than not it is supplemented by a *halgī* or a *ḍhol*. The swinging of *lezim* is done in four or eight counts. The

four-count swing does not generally include the overhead stroke. The eight-count one admits the overhead stroke and looks more graceful.[1]

The *Pālkhi* dance. The typical palanquin in which metal images, generally of the local deities are placed is danced by two men. Keeping the palanquin on their shoulders, the dancers firmly catch hold of its bottom with their hands. They stand facing each other, in a stance position, ready to move.

At the beginning they slightly swing the palanquin, standing on the same spot. After a few swings they start stepping sideways, keeping time with the beat of the drum. As the beat of the drum becomes faster and the cheering of the group louder, the palanquin dancers mechanically increase their speed. Sometimes one of them tries to push back the other instead of the usual sideward movement. This action is believed to be inspired by the deities, who are supposed to force the dancers towards the buried *sherne*. People also believe that if a dancer is obstinate, the weight of the palanquin increases so as to make it unbearable to both.[2]

The *Radha* dance is one of the few artistic folk-dances of Maharashtra where individual performance is what matters, As we have seen so far, the movements in other dances, whether group or individual, are quite fundamental and restricted, mainly, to big muscles. The method of singing, the accompaniment music and the dress are more elegant and polished in this dance than in those treated so far. We feel that if we had so far seen in other folk-dances merely the trunk and the big branches of the tree of dance we observe in this dance not only the twigs, the leaves and the sprouts, but the blossom too. The ripe fruit, of course, is the purely artistic dance. Here one sees the seeds of the different *mudrās* and facial expressions of the purely artistic dance, when

1. For a detailed study of the formations and movements, See *Our Physical Activities*, pp. 180 – 195.

2. In 1945, however, one of my colleagues completely shattered this belief to the utter disappointment and fury of our village folk, by taking a firm stand and not budging even an inch, with the palanquin on his shoulder for nearly half an hour, in spite of the endeavour of the devotees to tempt him to move by beating the drum incessantly and yelling loudly.

the various incidents described in the song are being shown in action. Many of the smaller muscle-groups and muscles which are unconsciously neglected in other folk-dances are made full use of in this dance. The tips of the fingers, nay, even the eye-brows and the eyelashes are not missed. It is really a treat to watch this performance of the village folks, with the perfect harmony of the well-tuned instruments, accompanied by the melodious singing of the leader and the chorus of the group, and the theme danced in an exquisite manner. Naturally, this dance forms the basis of the *tamāshā*, the folk opera and the *dashāvatār* or *bohādā*, the folk-ballet of Maharashtra, if we may call them so.

The dance derives the name from the central figure of the dance, Radha, the famous *paurāṇic* character of the Radha-Krishna love episode. This love episode in which Radha longs and yearns for being one with the Lord is interpreted in various ways, divine and amorous, according to the angle of vision and the profession of the interpreters. *Purāṇiks*, *kīrtankārs* and *tamāsgīrs* draw liberally on it, the *tamāsgīr*, as is natural to his profession, presenting the incidents in an overt and lascivious form.

The formation is simple. The group forms nearly a semicircle, with Radha at its centre. In some places, the *Sankāsur* dances with Radha, while in some others, the leader of the group comes forward and dances with Radha whenever occasion demands. In a few places there are two dancers representing Radha.

The starting movement in many places is strikingly identical. The dancing boy, in his attire of Radha, starts shuffling his feet forwards, the jingling sound of the *chāls* perfectly harmonizing with other accompaniment instruments. The whole body is erect and as Radha advances bit by bit, the whole body shakes slightly on account of the forward movement. The right hand is fully stretched forward and the left one is bent at the elbow, the palms describing circuits, being twisted at the wrists. The circuit begins from inside with an outward motion, which is very gracefully executed, and resembles the movement of a creeper caused by a gentle breeze. After a few inches of space have thus been covered,

the dancer rotates round himself from the right to the left, and with a light and graceful jump brings this initial movement to a close. Then start the songs selected, generally, with an eye on the taste of the spectators or in response to a demand from them. The dancer and the leader of the group sing a line which is repeated in chorus by the group. There is no footwork while the two sing, but when the line is repeated in chorus, the dancer tries to convey the contents by appropriate movements and expresions. In imitation songs, however, the song and the movements start together.

*Gherāchā nāch* of the Bhils. The formation, as the name suggests, is circular. The participants move round and round in clockwise and anticlockwise directions. At times the odd numbers shift a few steps inside towards the drummer who along with his companion playing the cymbals and sometimes another one playing on the flute, is sitting at the centre and the move is repeated by the even numbers next. The movement thus is made by the odd and even numbers alternately.

*Rathāchā nāch* of the Bhils. The participants stand in a circle in two tyres members of the upper tyre standing on the shoulders of those of the lower. The number foming the lower tyre is naturally one more than that of the upper. It is this position which gives the name to the dance. It is interesting and exceptional that the participants dance arranged in two tyres moving once in one direction and once in the other. The movements, as is but natural for such a formation, are simple.

**Ecstatic Dances.**

*Kadak Laxmī.* The name is rather misleading. Laxmi in this case represents not the consort of god Vishnu, but the Ambabai of Kolhapur. The sound of the whip which the dancer flourishes while chastising himself with it, is responsible for the appellation *Kadak* which literally means strong and harsh.

The dance is always performed by two persons one, woman and the other a man. The latter is dressed like a

woman, has long hair, no beard, but keeps moustaches. The woman's dress is normal.

With the percussion sound of the drum the woman starts dancing. She has on her head a box with image of the goddess Amba in it. With a bunch of peacock-feathers in her right hand, she dances for a while from one direction towards the opposite direction and dancing back to the original position, makes a sort of obeisance by crossing arms over her breasts, and then stands marking time, as if in a trance.

The man with a yell then takes a round and starts whipping himself. After repeating this performance of chastising himself for a number of times and trying to show that the goddess is not still satisfied with the penalty he has imposed on himeelf he takes out a pack-needle and tying his biceps muscle of his left arm with a string pierces it with the needle till blood comes out. While whipping and piercing, he trembles as if possessed. These sadistic movements, create a tense and mystic atmosphere which leads an onlooker to believe in the genuineness of the dancers being possessed.

## Bhagat.

The name appears to be a corrupt form of *Bhakta*–a devotee. By means of his magical practices he is supposed to get access to the supernatural and to divine things.

The movements of the *Bhagat* are generally restricted to the upper half of the body, as he usually works in a squatting position. The movements of the neck which are very prominent are slow to start with, but get faster by and by till ultimately they become very violent. Occasionally he beats himself with his *pānzok*. He has a bunch of peacock-feathers in his hand which he waves over those who are to be exorcised.

Funeral dances. The movements in the *Kumbhār* dance are akin to those of the Radha dance.

In the funeral dance of the Bhils, namely *varī ghālaṇe*, three dancers walk in a zigzag way from the funeral place to the house of the deceased. A woman carries on her head

a bread placed in a small bundle of grass called *kogạt.* The relatives of the deceased carry the *kogạt* on head for a while, by turns. One of the dancers plays on the *ḍholkī* and another, on a flute as they dance. The third carries no instrument. The movements are simple and there is no singing.

## Virs.

*Vīr*, which literally means a hero or a brave one is a male dancer dancing in honour of his ancestors who have died in war or by accident. Those who die in war are called *vīrs* and the name probably signifies that the dance is in their honour. The movements of the dancer are like those of a duelist advancing against his adversary. He follows a zigzag course while dancing from his house to the village temple, hopping and skipping on each leg alternately, the hands swaying in accordance with the foot-work. Some of the *vīrs* get possessed at the temple. The possessed squats on the ground and nods his head violently, the whole trunk shaking.

### Dances of the females.

## *Mangalagour* dances.

*Phugaḍī.* There are a number of dances performed on this occasion, the most popular and prominent being the *phugaḍī.* It is played generally by two but the number may even be upto eight if there is enough room. The movements of the pair are simple. The girls stand facing each other and with arms crossed clasp each other's palms. With feet together, arms stretched and leaning back they now start whirling round which goes on till one or both feel exhausted.

There are many varieties of *phugaḍī.* In one instead of clasping palms, they catch hold of the arms and is known as *danḍ-phugaḍī.* In another, one stands while the other

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squats. In a third one known as *jāte*, one is standing while the other keeps only the left or right toes on the ground, the other foot being placed on the opposite thigh. In a fourth one, instead of catching both hands, they catch only one hand and it is consequently termed *ek hātāchī phugaḍī* meaning *phugaḍī* with one hand. In a fifth one, which is an individualistic dance, a girl squats on toes and moves her legs forward alternately. While thus advancing, the corresponding arms are also moved to keep the balance. When the dancer does not intend to advance, she takes back one leg when the other goes forward. This is known as *bas-phugaḍī, bas* meaning to sit.

When the number of participants is more than two, the movements are different. The starting position also differs. The girls form a ring either by crossing arms and catching palms of the neighbour on either side or by putting their arms on the shoulders of their neighbours. They now move in a circle by taking short sideward steps generally in an anti-clockwise direction. Though this type of *phugaḍī* is in a way spectacular, and though it can accommodate more girls, it lacks the vigour as well as the sense of competition so pronounced in a partnered *phugaḍī*. Again, the movements in a group *phugaḍī* are cumbrous, as it is difficult for every member of the group to adapt efficiently to the rhythm of the group as a whole.

*Nāch-go-ghumā*. This is a group dance. As the name indicates, girls are beseeching their companion who is dejected, because she has not the clothes, ornaments and other requisites necessary to dispel her sense of inferiority and induce her to join the party to dance with them. So one girl who represents the *ghumā* stands with a winnowing pan (*sūp*) in her hands at the centre of the circle formed by other girls. As she puts forth her complaints to the company, she alternately raises and lowers the *sūp* before her face. She also raises her feet alternately slightly changing direction each time. Girls standing around her catch hold of the palms of their neighbours and move round taking short sideward steps keeping to the time of the song.

*Kombḍā*. This is done individually or in a group. The

participants place one knee over the other and on the upper knee keep the palms interlocked and go on jumping, imitating the movements of a cock. The word *kombḍā* means a cock.

*Kis-bāi-kis.* Girls arrange themselves in pairs. Two rows are formed facing each other and with a distance of about four steps between them by taking in each row one girl from each pair. With hands on their hips the girls advance in a row and when they cross they take an about turn and again advance. Occasionally instead of keeping both the hands on hips, the right one is bent at the elbow and stretched forward. While advancing they jump lightly keeping both feet together.

The name is suggestive. Its meaning is to scrape and the action of scraping is very well imitated in this dance.

*Sāḷuṅkī sāḷuṅkī* or *pagḍā phū.* Two girls stand facing each other at a distance of about four steps. They advance towards each other two steps and again retreat to their original place. While advancing they jump lightly forward keeping hands on their hips. After two or three turns they cross each other and exchange places. This is continued till the song is complete.

*Piṅgā.* Here again there is competition. Two girls stand facing each other with their hands on their hips. Bending at the waist and bending their head downward as far as possible, they circumduct their trunk in either direction.

*Kāthoṭ-kāṇā.* This is done individually or in a group, space permitting. The participant sits and catches the great toes with her hands right with right and the left with the left and takes a sidward roll in either direction. This continues to exhaustion and tests the stamina. *Loḷaṇ* means rolling, and the game is also called *Loḷaṇ phugaḍī.*

*Agoṭā-phāgoṭā – zinzoṭā.* Generally the participants are two and they stand facing each other with hands on their hips. The distance between them is about eight steps. They advance towards each other taking strides crossing their legs at each stride. The song suggests that this refers to the movement of a woman who is cross.

*Zimmā.* This is a group-dance in which the movements are less vigorous. The participants stand in a circle

and arrange themselves in pairs facing each other. The movements are very much akin to the *tiprī* dance. Instead of *tiprī* however, they clap to keep time, once with their own hands and once by striking one's palms against those of the advancing member.

*Pāsoḍyā*. Girls sit on the ground with legs stretched. Raising the knees half way up and keeping palms over them right on the right and left on the left, they slide the heels forward making a sound like that of the washing of clothes. The game gets its name from *pāsoḍī* which means a sheet of cloth.[1]

## *Gouricha nach.*

*Gourīchā nāch*. Kunbi women dance in a circle. Bending at the waist they go round in an anticlockwise direction taking sideward steps, keeping time sometimes by clapping or sometimes by snapping fingers. Only occasionally they twist slightly to the right and to the left, alternately. The movement otherwise is monotonous, though the changing lines of the song are a redeeming factor.

The formation of the Agri women's dance is different from that of the Kunbi women. They stand in two rows which face one another, keeping a distance of about eight steps between them. One group advances while the other retreats. Sometimes both the rows advance till they meet and then they retreat. They clap to keep time and their songs are abnormally long. A song at times lasts for more than a couple of hours and yet there is no break in the dance. The movements are as monotonous as those of the Kunbi women.

## *Dasara* dances.

Katkari women dance in a circle. Bending very low, till their hands nearly reach the ground they move briskly in an anticlockwise direction. They have short sticks in

1. There are other minor activities which have not been described here. For a detailed study of these activities see *Our Physical Activities*, pp. 36-39.

their hands with which they keep time. They strike one stick on the other, never with that of their neighbour. As time passes, the rhythm becomes faster. Their songs are comparatively short and the dance comes to a close at the end of each song. After short interval, dancing is resumed with a fresh song.

Thakur women also dance in a circle. Facing inward, they divide themselves into two compact groups. Members of one of the group, the leader group, sing and move in a circle, keeping practically erect. During this time, those of the other group, the follower group, bend and sway their hips as they move. They do not sing at this time. It is only when the leader group has finished a line of the song that the two group exchange postures and the follower group repeats the line while the leader group moves without singing. They keep time by clapping.

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# IV

## DRESS AND ACCOMPANIMENT MUSIC

### The *dindi* dance.

The first regular occasion for a predominently male dance during the cycle of a year is as we have seen *Āshāḍhī ekādashī*. The number of women participants in this dance is negligible, and therfore I have included this among the male dances.

The dress of the participants, a few years back, was not different from what they used to wear on festival days. The orthodox among them, and such others who wanted to show off as being so, however, used to wear clothes of ochre colour. There was no uniformity in kind or colour of the dress. But the modern tendency is to have a uniform dress, specially of white colour and to wear a white khaddar cap on the head. In the past, the participants used to carry ochre-coloured flags with them. To day, the tricolour is also seen. There is, however, no change in the accompanying musical instruments namely *Mridang*, *tāḷ* and *vīṇā*.

*Mridang* is an instrument for keeping time. It is an oval-shaped, hollow, wooden cylinder, generally 20 to 24 inches in length with a diameter of about 8 inches at the centre, slightly sloping on either side, one end being a little broader than the other. Both the ends are fully covered with goatskin kept tight by means of a thin long leather strap. A strip of goatskin about an inch broad is overlaid at the rims. At the centre of the smaller surface, a paste of ironfilings is glued to cover a circular area of about 3 inches diameter. The thickness of the plastering determines the pitch of the instrument. Cylindrical wooden pegs approximately 3 inches long and one inch in diameter are inserted between the strap and the wooden cylinder. Discreet manipulation of these pegs produces a sound to suit tunes of different pitch. Various types of *bols*, time-measures, can be played on this instrument. But the main advantage of this instrument lies in the fact

that it can be played upon in various positions—squatting, standing or even walking. A *mridang* player is an important figure in the group since others have to adjust according to his timing.

But the more important instrument is the *tāl*. It is a cymbal-like instrument, generally made of brass or bronze. It is however cup-shaped, and not flat like a cymbal and it is thicker and therefore slightly heavier. It produces a sonorous sound of a very high pitch and the rhythmic beats keep the participants completely absorbed. Generally each member of the group has a pair of *tāls*. The strings of the *tāls* of neighbours are interlocked, which prevents the dancers from straying.

Another musical instrument, which is generally found with the group is the *tamburi* or *viṇā* the well-known Indian lyre. It is a bass-instrument to provide the singer with the necessary volume of sound of particular regularly recurring notes. But in this dance, it is doubtful how far it serves this purpose. It is completely inaudible to outsiders amidst the high pitched sound of the *tāls* and the *mridang*. The only person who hears its sound is perhaps the player himself. It is, however, important as the *viṇā* player is supposed to be the leader of the group.

## The *tipri* and *goph* dances.

*Tipri* and *goph* dances on the *Gokulāshṭami* day and the *Govindā* dance on the day following, come next. Formerly, boys used to wear a special dress for the *tiprī* dance. They were attired in dhotis with silk border, though many of these had to be borrowed for the occasion. Caps with embroidary work were put on. The use of face powder and of a kerchief was not uncommon, though these were not in everyday use then as they are today. The kerchief was usually tucked in the dhoti at the waist along with the shirt. Nowadays the boys are generally in half pants and half shirts, with plain caps or even without any.

The instruments generally used on this occasion are the *tablā*, a pair of cymbals or a gong and *tiprīs*. Nowadays

harmonium is used in addition wherever available. *Chāls*, chains of jingles, are also tied to the ankles.

*Tablā* is so to say a *mridang* detached in two independent parts. One of the two is known as *tablā*, from which that accomponiment derives its name, and the other one is known as *daggā*. *Tablā* is generally carved out of a cylindrical piece of wood preferably of the Khair tree, while *daggā* is usually made of copper though brass and clay are at times used. Both the *tablā* and the *daggā* have only their upper ends open. The *tablā* is broad at the base and slightly tapers towards the face while the *daggā* is small at the base, slightly bulging at the middle and broad at the top. *Tablā* is generally 12 to 16 inches in height and the diameter at the open end is from 8 to 10 inches. *Daggā* is 10 to 14 inches in height and the open end is 10 to 12 inches in diameter. The open ends of both are covered up with goat-skin as in the case of the *mridang*. *Tablā* can be played comfortably in the sitting position only though it can be contrived to play upon it in a standing position. *Tiprī* is a wooden stick 14 to 16 inches in length, about an inch in diameter at the broad end, tapering to the other end which is about half as much in diameter. Sometimes a small bunch of jingles is attached to the broad end. Each participant has a pair of *tiprīs* one in each hand, and one strip from the *goph*, in addition, in the left one when they perform the *goph* dance.

*Goph* consists of long strips of cloth 4 to 5 yards in length, of different colours, generally red and white. The number is usually eight, but sometimes it is twelve or even sixteen. It depends upon the number of players participating. These strips are attached to a wooden or metal disc with holes in its circumference.

### The *kala* dance.

Very little clothing usually a mere loin-cloth is used by dancers at the time of the *Govindā* dance, as water, buttermilk etc. are poured on their bodies throughout the course of the dance. The participants wield clubs or *lāthis* in their hands.

The accompaniment music on this occasion is provided generally by the *khālū* which is a set of musicians, the minimum number being three. One plays on the *sanaī*, another on the *ḍhol* and the third on the *ṭimkī*. The *sanaī* and the *ḍhol* resemble respectively the clarionet and the tomtom, while the *ṭimkī* is like the *ḍaggā* but smaller in size and higher in pitch. They are also engaged for marriage ceremonies, especially for the *ākhāḍā* whose members do not feel inspired without the high pitched tune of the *khālū*.

## Gouricha nach.

Every one tries to appear at his best on this occasion. The Kunbis of Ratnagiri district are very particular about their dress and even a miser spends much on clothes, for this occasion. A gorgeous-coloured *sāphā*, fine mulmull shirt, a dhoti with a beautiful border or a pyjama and a silken kerchief with a fine design, are the much coveted clothes that everybody tries to have on this occasion. *Mṛidang* and a pair *ṭāḷs* or of cymbals are the only instruments used. Chains of jingles are prominent.

## Dholacha nach.

Thakurs and Katkaris use the *ḍhol*, a drum about three feet in length and one and a half feet in diameter. Generally, it is carved out of the trunk of a mango or some other suitable tree. The diameter is uniform from one end to the other. The open ends are covered with hides, which are tightened by means of thin but strong rope, preferably of hemp. The *ḍhol* that the Bhils use is bigger and is many a time made of metal, like the *ḍhols* used at the time of the palanquin procession in the Shimga festival by villagers from Ratnagiri district. The *ḍhols* that accompany the palanquin procession are, however played with sticks, and not with the hands like the *ḍhols* used at the time of dancing. All these *ḍhols* and even the *mridang* of Kunbis have a bangle and a betelnut in the hollow. It is believed that without these the instrument will not yield the proper sound.

The dances are restricted mainly to members of hill tribes who are hardly particular about dress, being indigent and backward. Today however there is a recognizable change in the attitude of these people to dress which seems to be the result of their contact with the Kunbi neighbours who, as we have seen, reserve better clothes for dancing occasions.

## *Tarapi* dances.

*Tārapī* is a wind instrument peculiar to the Warlis, Malhar Kolis and the Ka Thakurs. It varies in length from two to five feet. The length, however, does not make any substantial difference in pitch. It has three parts; the upper part consists of a gourd and the bigger it is, the longer is the *tārapī*. This is hollow and air is continuously forced in it by the player, which then passes through the middle part, which is made of hollow twin bamboo tubes. One of the tubes has six holes which are used by the player for manipulating notes. The same note, however, cannot be distinctly repeated in succession. In this respect it resembles the Highlanders' bagpipe. Because of the nonrecurrence of the same note in succession and of the absence of a distinct pause between two consecutive notes, the tune appears more or less monotonous, inspite of the fact that there are a number of distinct tunes. Every dance has a separate tune and a trained ear can only on hearing the *tārapī*, say what dance is going on. The lower part is made of palm leaves and is more or less ornamental. All these parts are joined with beeswax.

## *Shimga* dances.

There are at least half a dozen dances performed on this occasion. Each dance has its characteristic dress. Instead of making a general statement regarding the dress, therefore, the description is given dancewise.

*The Rādhā dance.* In this dance the dancing boy is dressed in an upper class woman's attire. Artificial hair and *chāḷs* are worn and women's ornaments are put on. Other members of the party put on their best clothes according to the usage of the caste. For instance, a member belong-

ing to the *Telī* caste wears a turban of the Brahmanic type, which he uses by tradition on such occasions and at the time of marriage and the like ceremonies; a Maratha uses a turban typical of his caste and so on.

The musical instruments used on this occasion are the *ḍholkī*, the *ḍaph*, the *tuṇtuṇe*, a pair of *tāls* and at times *vīṇā*.

*Ḍholkī* is a miniature *ḍhol*, about one and half feet in length and 8 to 10 inches in diameter.

*Tuṇtuṇe* is a string instrument and serves the purpose of keeping time. There is a wire attached to a bamboo stick, 2 to 2½ feet long and thick enough to be easily held in hand. At the bottom of the stick is fixed a hollow wooden cylinder, the lower end of which is covered tightly with a piece of goat-skin. From the centre of the skin the wire runs straight nearly to the top of the bamboo, where it is adjusted by means of a small peg, inserted in the bamboo. The instrument is held in the left hand and played with the right by means of a small, thin chip of wood.

*Ḍaph* is very important in this dance and serves the purpose of keeping time. A thin wooden strip 5 to 6 inches broad and 3 to 4 ft. long is turned round and the ends are joined to form a ring one side of which is then tightly covered up with a piece of goat-skin. It is played with both hands, the right one being more emphatic. The left hand is used for striking the *ḍaph* with a thin, slender and slightly elastic chip of wood. *Tāls* used on this occasion are slightly smaller than those used at the time of *dinḍī*, but *vīṇā* is of the same type.

The *kāṭkheḷ* dance. The dress of the participants in this dance is very interesting. The head-dress consists of a Maratha type turban over which a red-bordered dhoti is tied cross-wise. The loose ends of the dhoti are allowed to dangle over the back. This addition not only makes the head-dress picturesque but also serves the purpose of keeping the turban in position even in the heat of brisk dance-movements. A shirt with long sleeves covers the trunk, and across the chest, a dhoti with red border is crossed and knotted at the back. Covering the legs in a dhoti or a pyjama the participants wear over it a saree of red or blue colour with borders, wrapped with a number of folds round the waist in such a manner that

the thighs are entirely covered with the border of the saree. They fasten chains of jingle's at their ankles. In their hands they hold a pair of *tiprīs* and a bunch of white fibres, which sway with the movements of the *tiprīs* and add to the grace of the dance. A *mridang* and a pair of cymbals are the only instruments used.

The *naktā* dance. In the *kātkhel* dance the members of the party excepting the musicians wear their typical dress and dance. In this dance, only three members of the party, the *naktā*, the *Kolī* and the *Kolīn* dance. The dress of the *Kolī* is identical with the one used by a dancer in the *katkhel* dance, but instead of *tiprīs* he has a mock bow with a fixed arrow in the right hand, while the left one is, many a time, interlocked with that of the *Kolīn*. The *Kolīn* is a boy, at times grown up enough to have his moustaches visible, which nobody worries about. He is dressed like a fisherwoman, with a number of bangles on one wrist, while the other is bare. People however, are not, so minutely particular about the dress as in the case of *Rādhā*. As a rule, artificial hair are not used but the head is covered with a piece of cloth, the ends of which are passed from below the armpits and held in hand at the front.

The *naktā* wears a pair of trousers and a coat in the European style. He has a set of bells round his waist and holds a wooden sword in the right hand, and a mock-shield in the left. For the head-dress he has a wooden mask. It is painted white; and *gunj*[1] seeds are sometimes fixed to the eyebrows and the nose to give it a more dreadful appearance. The mask has a tuft of white fibres at the top and, at times a white beard. The instruments for the accompaniment music are the same as those in *kātkhel*.

The *Sankāsūr* dance.—This is a solo[2] dance where *Sankāsūr* is dressed in the same way as the *naktā*, excepting the head-dress, which consists of a long cone-shaped mask made generally of old cloth used for umbrellas. The eyebrows, the

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1 Abrus pricotorius.

2 In Kolaba district it is a duet where the Sankasur dances in the company of Radha.

nose and the lips are painted white with chunam or strips of white cloth are stitched on it. At the top, there is a tuft of white fibres or a small strip of white cloth.

The *ḍerā* dance. A grown up boy is dressed as in *kātkheḷ* and another boy is dressed in a female attire. Other members of the party, who have no special dress sing to the tune of the *derā* which is played upon by the couple while dancing.

The *derā* is an earthen pot with its mouth covered tightly with a goat-skin. The pot contains water and two strips of palm-leaf each about three feet long are inserted and fixed at the centre of the goat-skin. The instrument is placed on the ground and a person sits and holds it between his knees. The players as they dance hold the strips between their fingers and the thumb, and alternately draw their hands towards themselves. The friction of the fingers on the strip gives out a kind of droning note, which serves as a tune to the singers and resembles the sound audible at the time of churning buttermilk in a *ḍerā*—a big earthen pot

*Kolyācha kheḷ*. A boy is dressed as a fisherwoman. He holds a knife in his right hand and a kerchief in the left. Other members are dressed like old type fishermen, wearing a rectangular loin-cloth, the major portion of which hangs down at the front, the buttocks being practically bare. They wear shirts and bead necklaces and are bare-headed. Each of them except the *nākhvā* has a miniature oar in his hands. *Nākhvā*, the captain, holds in his hands a bottle of liquor and a glass. When this dance is performed during the Shimga festival *mridang* and a pair of cymbals are the only instruments used, but when the dance is performed at the time of a marriage ceremony, *khālū* is considered the proper accompaniment.

The *pālkhī* dance. There is no peculiarity about dress at this time, the dancers using their usual holiday dress. Some of them, however, carry with them flags of different sizes. *Ḍhols* of big size are beaten with sticks in both hands on this occassion. Other local musicians also accompany.

*The Dashāvatārs*. On the Ghatside, specially in Nasik district,there is a special mask practically for each role. Ravan with ten faces, for example, has a mask with nine heads, the tenth

being that of the actor himself. These are attached to a light semicircular frame of bamboo, on the top of which are lighted a number of tiny lamps. Ganapati has the mask of an elephant's head. He has also two additional artificial hands. He wears a *pitāmbar*-a costly silk garment, which is his traditional dress. Saraswati is shown seated on a peacock, with kerchiefs in both hands.

Rama wears a crown and wields his favourite bow and has a quiver of arrows on his back. Nrisimha has his mask of a lion's head and his body is covered with a gown painted to look like the body of a lion. *Matsya*, *Kūrma* *Varāha* etc. have special head-masks. The image of the eight-handed goddess Durga is made of paper-pulp and worn by the actor. Khandoba, is shown as sitting on a horse. As far as possible people try to follow faithfully the description of these *avatārs* given in the *purāṇās*. In other parts of Maharashtra, however, this tendency is fast disappearing. Ganapati and Saraswati have their entry in the orthodox style. Other characters are either orally described by the *sutradhār* the conductor, or by the actors themselves , On Malvan and Goa side, i. e. in south Konkan, people are nowadays trying to imitate the dramatic companies in matters of dress and presentation.

## Dances of the females.

Excepting the Lamans whose domicile in Maharashtra is rather doubtful, women of no other caste or tribe have any special dress for dancing occasions; nor do they wear masks on any such occasion like the males: They put on their best clothes and make profuse use of flowers for decorating their hair.

They have few musical instruments. In many cases clapping is resorted to for keeping time. In a purely women's dance like that of the Thakurs, *dholkī* is the only instru-

1. The ten incarnations of Vishnu are : *Matsya* (fish), *Kurma* (tortoise), *Varaha* (boar), *Nrisimha* (half lion, half man), *Waman* (dwarf), Parashuram, Ram, Krishna, Bouddha and Kalanki.

ment sometimes used for an accompaniment and is played upon by a boy. Only the Sonkoli women dance to the accompaniment of *mridang*.

**Mixed dancing.**

For mixed dances, as a rule, neither men nor women have any peculiar dress and the musical instruments are the same as those of the male dances. Ka Thakur women, however, cover their usually bare breasts with scarfs of gaudy colours and designs when they dance.

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# V

## SONGS

There are a number of songs that are sung on various dancing occasions. I shall present just a few of them, selecting only such typical songs as will either enable the reader to understand the musical ability and standard or throw some light on the theme and the social significance of the occasion.

*Dindī.* In this dance the party sings a number of *bhajan* songs selected generally from the works of Ekanath, Namdev or Tukaram, the great saint-poets of Maharashtra. These are sung standing. They do not comprise the subject-matter of our critical study and are available in the published works of the saint-poets. They are mostly devotional or didactic songs. The names of Jnandev or Jnanoba and Tukaram are recited, at intervals, in different tunes. Sometimes the names of other saints like Nivritti, Sopan, Muktabai. Eknath and Namdev are also added. The line runs as follows :—

1. Jnyānobā Tukārām, Jnānadev Tukārām.

***The tipri* and *goph* dance.**

2. Receive one *tiprī*, strike the other,<br>
Give the third (and) turn on the fourth.<br>
Give the fifth, strike the sixth<br>
(And) change at the seventh .<br>
Immeasurable is the joy the mind receives<br>
When with Hari you play and his virtues sing,<br>
That the earth falls short for the play<br>
Such in the power of Hari.

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1. The first four lines are obviously meant for the guidance of the participants.

Reaching the ears the tune extremely sweet
That Hari, filled with affection, played
Infatuated all the maids and milkmen ;
Such is the power of Hari.

3. Look at the strife,
Oh, look at the strife.
We have snatched away their crown,
Oh, look ! look at the strife.

4. Ye milkmaids, come with me;
Let us join the *tiprī* contest,
Do not fear and lag behind.
Oh ! these (opponents) are not skilled enough
And have come to *tiprī* contest,
Their instructor (is) a complete idiot;
Who can save them (from the predicament) ?

***Govinda* dance.**

5. Krishna has come, oh, he is come,
The *Gokūḷ* is full of joy.
On account of him: oh ! for his sake
Sugar is distributed in *Gokūḷ*.

6. The *Govindā* party of × × × lane has come.
Beware, ye foes !

7. O, Govind ! o, Gopal !
Give us curds, o Gopal !
Give us milk, o Gopal !
O Govind ! o Gopal !

8. Shoulder to shoulder do we stand,
The gangsters have been thoroughly slashed,
The hotel-keeper's tea is nice and hot,
Good hiding have the gangsters got.

9. There is no water in her house,
The waterpot is empty in the enjoyment room.

***Gour* dance.**

10. A spotted cow on the river bank
    Underneath whom mountain forests spread.
For a bath did Parvati come to the spot,
    Away she threw the scurf of her body
And lo! *Gaṇa* was created of the scurf,
    For Shiva's worship *Gaṇa* sallied forth.
Mouse was *Gaṇa's* carrier-horse,
    *Gaṇa* mounted this carrier-horse,
With a whip he hit his carrier horse,
    Which caused the carrier's legs to slip.
And down came the *Gaṇa*.
    The Moon laughed at the plight.
And at this the *Gaṇa* got wild
    And he cursed the Moon :
" One who sees you on the *Chaturthī* night
    Falsely shall he be accused of theft."

11. Ripe are the lemons and the pommegranates,
    (Of them) a present is made to the brother,
My brother is very gay and jolly,
    For me he gets the toe-rings[1] cast,
Sitting on the banks of the river Yamuna.
    On them designs he carves.

12. The British domain is far and wide,
    The German wolf has entered the land.

13. Slowly and steadily let us tread the path,
    The slogan *Jai Hind* let us sing,
The slogan *Jai Hind* let us sing,
    And achieve independence for India.

***Divali* dances.**

14. Obeisance first to the Sun and the Moon,
    Second one to the Mother Earth,

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1. Armlet, Wrist ornaments etc. are substituted for toe-ring and the song continues.

To the drummer the third must be made.
The dance-leader was the first to be called;
Second was the player on the drum,
To-day the dance tune has filled,
All the fields and hills and dales.
The *Kāmadī* women are singing the songs,
Who else can sing the songs?
When the first call was made.
O brother! the cattle did respond.

15. The compound wall of the bungalow high,
O mother! the compound wall of the bungalow high.
I was playing there, o mother!
In the bungalow was I playing, o mother!
There was a cowherd boy, o mother!
There was a cowherd boy, o mother!
The same is my fiancee, o mother!
The same shall be my husband, o mother.

16. The foot has been placed on the earth,
The father-in-law no one wants to follow,
But the husband is followed with a smiling face,
None likes to follow the mother-in-law.

17. Charming are the mango sprouts,
(And so is) the style of the dancing chief.
Look at the style of the dancing dame.

18. The smoke, the smoke of the railway train,
Like a wending of the Sūryā river (appears),
The smoke, the smoke of the railway train,
Like a wending of the Kāḷū river (appears).

19. What talent doth the village possess?
There is no grace without a *kāwāaya* dance,
There is no comeliness without dancing dames,
There is no elegance without the dancing chief,
There is no charm without the woman who sings.

20. The Forest Guard is dead and gone;
Good it is he is dead and gone,

Now the forest is free !
  The forest wolf is dead;
'Tis well that he is dead;
  Free has the forest become.

21. In the garden how shall I stay alone ?
  How shall I play the *phugaḍī* dance?

22. Whose assembly this, whose ?
  This assembly is of god *zoṭing*.

23. Where shall I? Where shall I dance now?
  Oh! (dance) on the back of the earth.

24. The daughter of a king – a king.
  She was a marriagable one,
A thousand persons enjoyed her.
  And then they went to heaven.
To this day, on this earth,
  A thousand enjoy her still,
And she is a marriagable one!
  Who could be this girl ?
Is the riddle I put you.

Answer:—Oh, the girl – the girl must be
  My boy, it seems she is the agricultural land.

25. From some far off country
  The woman – the woman came down.
And on one solitary day
  Was enjoyed a hundred times.
Was enjoyed a hundred times
  But remained a pure virgin!
Who could this woman be ?
  That's the riddle I put you.

Answer:—Oh, that I will tell you soon,
  The lady must surely be tobacco.

## *Zenda* dance.

26. *Gāyatrī* incantation, o! why do you chant ?
  (You say) it removes the sin and makes you pure.

Savitri's *gāyatrī* your mother you call,
  Yet when she dies, do you perform the obituary rites?
Why then in the hands ( of ) a Mahar
  You leave such a great mother of yours ?
If you consider a Mahar to be pure,
  Why then do you keep him away ?

27. To day, on thy bosom, oh, Mother Earth,
  To day, do I step for a dance.
Poor or awkward though the dance
  With god's approval surely meets.

28. What song full of wisdom shall I sing at first ?
  Birth is not possible without father;
None is more affectionate than mother;
  By thy side would stand none but thy brother;
No true relationship can there be without sister.
  No farming is practicable without bullocks.

29. In the heart of the drum
  What is it that boomed ?
Betel and bangle
  In the same spot spread.
Broken is my drum
  And choked is the sound.
In the heart of the night
  It is free and full.

30. Oh brother, I tie,I tie,
  I tie, o brother, the girdle.
At each round, o brother,
  I tie and untie, o brother.

31. The black cow,
  Oh, who has created her ?
For cowdung, God created her.

32. Hollow and dull is the sound of the drum, o brother,
  And miserably does the dance fail, o brother.

33. On the breasts of the fiancee
What is it that looks red ?
It is the silken bodice
That appears red on her breasts.
She is healthy and strong, o brother,
And round her neck, a kerchief's worn.
The fiancee is fair, o brother!
And tender are her breasts, o brother.

***Radha* dance.**

34. To Laxman did Ram give command
That Sita be taken to exile.
The chariot with its paraphernalia
Was got ready at midnight;
White horses with black ears were yoked to it
And Laxmaṇ was the charioteer.
The chariot cutting its way through the forest
Sita fell asleep; and when she awoke—
Lo! Laxman was not there,
(And) his whereabouts she did not know.
Wandering in the wide wild forest
(She) could trace him not.
Where could he have gone?
In the ninth month of pregnancy Sita, in exile,
Reached the hermitage of Tatoba.
Tatoba asked Sita
Where she wanted to go, and who she was.
"I am Janaki, the devoted wife of Ram
(And) presently shall I prove my mettle."
After full nine months she was deliverd
And the twins, Lav and Kush were born.

35. The lady dungwashes her courtyard,
Her courtyard she decorates with colour design.
The lady in her courtyard plays with pearls,
In her courtyard she weaves a wreathe.

36. O friend. in my courtyard, o friend,
Both *champak* and jasmine have grown.

Regular watering made them thrive,
Over the bower the creepers have spread
Pearl-like flowers are grown on creepers these;
Of them a wreathe I string,
The wreathe I offer to Mahamai with a bow.

37. Taking leave of Lord Shriram started Aganda.
By air did he go in search of Lanka (Ravana's land).
Within his sight when Lanka came
The monkey Aganda got enraged.
(Lanka) the island full of precious stones
And broad ocean surrounding.
Landed in Lanka the great Aganda
And saw all the gods imprisoned.
And when the assembly hall was full,
Making a seat of his tail
Sat Aganda a curious sight for all.
"Whence have you come and where do you go ?
What is thy name ? Oh what name ?"
"In search of Sita have I come
And to see the city of Ravan as well.
Listen, o ten-headed one, listen to the message:
Let go the imprisoned beautiful and chaste (Sita),
Otherwise, be damned in hell,
No more shall thou be left alive.
Let alone Sita, let her alone."
Thus to Ravan Aganda spoke.
To the assembly of Ravan, did Aganda go
To plead and to appeal and to try that way.
Said Ravan, "o Aganda,
Listen, listen to me, o ape.
By Ram was thy father slain
And treacherously; don't forget,
That now him you serve !
Is there any dearth for a job ?
Tell me, please do.
Go and take thy revenge
If filial love thou dost possess,

Fie on thee ! Vain is thy life !
Art thou not ashamed to show thy face
O thou, born in *kshatrīya* race ?"
Furious at this did Angada grew,
And fuming in rage at Ravan jumped
And delivered a solid kick on his chest.
When Ravan tumbled on the ground
Lo ! the whole Lanka was stirred,
And when Agand whirled himself
Many were thrown out of the hall.
Away he flew and carried with him the assembly hall !
Such are the exploits of Shriram.

***Nakta* dance.**

38. Under an *umber* tree a shallow well is dug,
(And) by the preceptor's prowess water has sprung,
"Get up, get up, sir, and have a bath."
While bathing does he a fish espy.
Breaking the sacred thread he makes a noose
And lo ! in it is caught a *Maḷyā* fish.
The noose in (his) hand and the fish on (his) head
Look, how the bowlegged Brahmin walks !
Give, o Brahmin lady, give me a handful of chillies
(And) how fine is the soup prepared of the fish !
Thrashing and pounding it is delivered to the fisherwoman.
The fisherwoman made it sour, fie upon it !

39. The rocks are broken and the stones are cut
By the stone-cutter *Kumbhār* are quarried the stones.
The stones are cut (full) twelve fingers in length.
(The stones are cut) for Parashuram's temple.

40. In the Brahmin's courtyard are planted the *champak* trees.
(And) the *champak* trees are planted in rows.
In abundance are the flowers bloomed,
(And) sweet is the fragrance of the flowers.

Beautiful is the courtyard of this lady,
Gods have come to her as guests.
41. The sun has arisen, (and) the rays are spread,
And under the rays the deer graze,
(And) it is a couple of deer that graze.

***Kolyacha* nach.**

42. O my friends ! I am going away in the country,
To my husband's place I go,
From my husband's place a letter has come,
My lord has called for me.
43. The train is steaming, o my car,
Stop my car, o stop my car,
O master, oh, brother master,
Hurry up please, and give a ticket,
Hurry up please and give a ticket,
Be quick,be quick,my friend who accompanied me
The friend has gone, oh, he has gone,
My friend has gone, and at Kalyan,
Fix the date of hearing at Kalyan, oh, fix the date.
Fix the date at Kalyan, and from Thana
Secure me a pleader from Thana, oh, secure me one.
Secure a pleader from Thana and decide the case
Oh, decide my case, decide my case.

***Phugadi*.**

44. Stones, o girl, stones of the well,
How our *phugaḍī* whirls so well.

45. Grindstone, o girl, red and soft !
Though I am young can mortgage you oft.

46. Earth o girl, dishful of earth !
We shall dungwash all walls, we the grand-daughters of × × ×,

47. Laddles. o girl, laddles for *sandhyā* !
Let us play *phugaḍī*, we the two rose buds.

48. Gold-threaded hem of the costly saree !
    Mr. × × gazes at Mrs. × × s' *phugaḍī*.

49, We are friends and let us make a common cause,
    And wear bangles made in our own country.

50. Flowers, o friend, basketful of flowers !
    Churning pot-like is × × 's daughter.

51. Boiled pulse, o friend, boiled pulse !
    If I am the pot you churn the curds.

52, Bags, o friend, bags of rice !
    Take off the butter, if I churn the curds.

53. Pan, o friend. a winnowing pan !
    If I remove the butter, you prepare the ghee.

54. Pots, o friend, pots of silver !
    If I prepare the ghee, you make *laḍḍūs*.

### *Nach go ghuma.*

55. "Dance, o you dejected one."
    "How can I dance ?
Of Alegaon (or) of Palegaon
    The florist has'nt come,
I have no wreathe,
    How can I dance ?"

### *Kathot kana.*

56. A wooden bowl !
    An oilman's mill !
The oilman went for sesamum seed,
    An insect fell in the sesamum seed,
The same is × × 's breed.

### *Zimma.*

57. Swiftly, o ! swiftly does Govinda proceed,
    On me he throws his powder red,

With the spray of his powder red
   Deeply coloured has become my braid.
Mould, o goldsmith mould
   A miniature cradle of pearls and gold.

58. " O daughter-in-law, o, daughter-in-law, "
   "What do you say, revered mother-in-law? "
" With your pair of bracelets
   What have you done, o, what have you done? "
" At the marriage ceremony of your son
   Did I give it, o, did I give it there."

59. To the minister says the king
   Summon the entrappers all.
In the forest did they snares spread.
   The deer went running amock.
In the snares was the deer caught.
   Call the Malari woman
And ask the price for the deer dead.
   Oh, sixty rupees for the deer be paid
Land he accepted measuring acres three.

60. The courtyard is dungwashed,
   Copper pots are placed.
Five coconuts have been cut
   And a potful of milk extracted.
A sumptuous feast has been prepared.
   Five leaf-dishes are stitched.
The delicacies are served.
   Invite the entrappers all.
They did have their fill.

61. The feet besmeared in knee-deep mud.
   The anklets from my feet have slipped away.
Ever since have I been after the anklets lost.

62. "Come dear, let us to the forest go.
   Teak rafters we shall cut;
House shall we build with a thatched roof;
   (Or) shall we have a storied house with tiles on.
Of bricks shall we construct the walls,

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59-60 Katkari women ; 61-63 Thakur women.

Of gold shall be the dome, my dear.
Red shall it appear from a distance long.
The necklace from neck shall I take off
And to the money-lender will be given
And your servitude shall thus come to an end."
Greatly the husband got vexed,
"Oh, my dear, don't get vexed."

63. "Come, come, my hubby dear, fan me with the hem of thy garment
Don't put they hand under the pillow and touch my bangles.
I am so sleepy, do not come near me.
My armlets will be broken."
"Let them break, we shall carry them with us
And to the goldsmith's lane shall we go."

**_Dera_ dance.**[1]

64. The gardener's daughter swept the dust,
The dust she gathered in a winnowing pan.
The winnowing pan she emptied on a dunghill.
On the dunghill arose a lemon plant.
In the garden grew the lemon plant.
On the lemon plant appeared a leaf.
Two leaves appeared on the lemon plant.
(And) a third one appeared.
The lemon plant branched off in sprouts.
The lemon-plant spread in a splendid tree.
Blossom appeared on the lemon-tree.
In due course the lemon tree did flower.
On that tree did lemons appear.
The lemon in due time began to ripe.
The gardener into the garden went.
He placed a ladder against the tree.
Up the tree did the gardener climb.
The gardener did the lemons pluck
In baskets did the gardener's wife put them.

1. Of the Agri women from the Kolaba district.

And with a piece of cloth she kept them covered.
The gardener from the tree got down
And kept them on the head of his wife.
From that place the gardener's wife
Marched to the village of Rāi
"Buy lemons, oh ye, buy lemons," she cried.
Out came Rāi in great hurry
"How many lemons for a pice ?" (She asked.)
"The green-ones are three a pice
The fully ripe are two per pice."
"From what village is this gardener-woman ?"
"I come from thy husband's place, o Rāi."
"Of my husband's family
How do the people fare?"
"All of them are hale and hearty
Your husband alone is not well."
Rāi hurriedly left the place
And ran to her mother's side.
"Oh mother, my mother dear,
When would you send me to my husband's place ?"
"Wait for the bazar-day of Mathura.
I shall buy thee a fine winnowing pan.
And then shall I send thee to thy husband's place."
From thence did Rai start
And to her father she approached.

She asks him when he should send her to her husband's place. She recives a similar reply. Then she approaches her brother and then her sister. She puts them the same question and receives similar answers.

Rāi began to oil her hair.
The oil-pot, from her hand, dropped on the ground.
"Oh mother, this is a bad omen," (she cried).
"Nothing is bad when you start for home," (her mother replied.)
Rāi went for a bath
The water-pot from her hand dropped down.
Rāi sat down to take her meal.

The food from her hand fell down.
Rāi began to comb her hair.
The comb from her hand dropped down.
Rāi began to decorate her hair.
The flowers from her hand dropped on the ground.
Rāi began to fold her clothes.
The clothes from her hand fell down.
Rāi started on her journey
And reached her own village.
She entered her house
And kept the clothes on the hanger.
She bowed down at her mother-in-law's feet.
"Get up, get up, o Rāi,
What business have you here?
Better be at thy father's place.
The gold has vanished away
Only the lac remains."[1]

She makes obeisance to her father-in-law, brother-in-law and sister-in-law and receives a similar reply.

Seven dishes were filled.
Seven stools were placed.
Seven pots were filled with water.
Six occupied the six seats.
Where has the seventh gone?
The seventh has gone to the pen.
Rāi went to the cow-pen.
Her husband there she did not find.
The cow began to speak in human voice:
"To heaven hast thy husband gone, o Rāi."
"Oh ye gods of the heaven!
What wrong have I done to you?
Even the stains of turmeric are not gone.[2]
On the forehead a mark of sandal paste."
"This way thy husband went
With the sacred mark on his forehead."

1. A beautiful simile—the position of husband and wife is clearly illustrated.
2. Suggestive of the very recent marriage.

"Scores of such widows come
(And) lure their husbands away from here."
In the full assembly of gods
She bowed at the feet of gods
And came with her husband back.
Rāi arrived at the cow-pen
And fell prostrate at the cow's feet.
Thence to the house she came
And bowed down at her mother-in-law's feat
"Get up, o Rāi, be with your husband all thy life.
Eternal bangles shall be thine."

She approaches her father-in-law, husband's brother and sister and receives the same benediction.

65. (Like) sweet balls are the residents of Rāi.
The residents of Rāi, o friend, the resident of Rāi.
Houlubāi comes to her mother's place,
Houlubāi, o friend, Houlubāi,
Their fields are on the hills,
On the hills, o friend, on the hills,
With thundering sounds the mountains burn,
With a thundering sound, o friend !
Bitterly do the deer cry,
Bitterly, o friend, bitterly,
The young one of the deer,
The young one of the deer, o friend !
To that young one of the deer,
To that young one, o friend !
That young one, the star of dawn,
The star, o friend, the star.
The moon is thy playmate,
Thy playmate, o friend, thy playmate,

66. Tender is the twing of the mango tree;
Tender is the sprout.

Who comes to her mother's place ?
  The lucky Houlubāi, o friend, the lucky one.

Who looks after her, o friend, who takes her care?
  Her younger brother,o friend,her younger brother.

The brother rides a purple mare.
  The purple mare falters, oh, she falters.

They see the brother, o friend, the brother they see.
  Taking the *viḍā* from the hand, make out the brother.

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# VI

## DANCING IN EARLY SOCIETY

In order to fully appreciate the function folk-dances served in early societies and with a view to analyse the motivation behind the folk-dances of Maharashtra, it is advantageous to have some idea of dancing in general and the place it has occupied in the life of early peoples in particular.

The word 'dance' brings before our mental horison certain physical movements as its fundamental components. All movements, however, are not dance; on the other hand, complete negation of movement though for a small fraction of a moment, at certain points, may form part of the dance. But generally dance and movement go together and there is nothing wrong in saying that a prominent feature which strikes most effectively in a dance is the movement. "Every movement demands for its performance a degree of force, a measure of space, and a passage of time. When these three elements are synchronised with perfect integration, the result is rhythmical." It is this rhythmical element that must permeate all dance movement. But to equate all rhythmic movement with dance is to widen its domain. Thus, for example, the undulations in a crop-field caused by a gentle breeze is a rhythmic movement; so is the breaking of waves in a lake or sea. We have therefore, to further qualify the statement by the addition of the words 'expressive of emotion.' Even this qualification[1] does not restrict the province of dance to its proper limits since it may include many forms of work, and hence another proviso 'without work-motif' becomes a necessity. So, dance may be described as all rhythmic movement, without work-motif, expressive of and prompted by emotion[2].

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1. Fogerty E., *Rhythm* (1937), p. 19.
2. See Sachs C., *World History of the dance*, p. 6.

Dance as a motor-rhythmic expression of excess energy produced by strong emotion or high-strung feelings, is found not only in men belonging to various culture-groups, but also in other animals, especially birds. " W. H. Hudson describes elaborate dances performed by the lapwig, rupicola and scissor-tail, both on earth and in air, involving group activity and regular figuration. All ostriches, adults as well as chicks, have a strange habit of 'waltzing'. After running for a few hundred yards, they will also stop and with raised wings spin around rapidly for some time, after until quite giddy, a broken leg occasionally occurs. Waltzing rats have been used by geneticists for interesting cross-breeding. A cock, especially in courting the hen will often run slowly and daintily on the points of his toes, with neck slightly inflated, upright and rigid, the tail half-dropped and all his body feathers fluffed up, the wings raised and expanded, the inside edges touching the sides of the neck for nearly the whole of its length and the plumes slowing separately, like an open fan. In no other attitude is the beauty of the plumage displayed to such advantage."[1] The dancing of the pigeon at the time of mating is a common sight in India. Further, "the study of anthropoid apes clearly shows that a series of essential dance-motifs are developed in their dances: forms like the circle and ellipse around the post, the forward and backward pace; movements like hopping, rhythmical stamping, whirling; and even decoration."[2] The purpose dance serves in birds and other animals on a lower level than that of man, appears to be twofold. First, it is an outlet for surplus energy and as such may be described as 'play' in its absolute form. Second, it is a contrivance provided by nature for the continuation of the species by attracting and exiting the mate for copulation.

Man appears to have inherited this disposition from his brutish ancestors. If, however, the physicel expression of the psychological urges and the resultant outcome were the same in men as in other animals, the history of dance would have been of little importance for a student of sociology. But, man, though deprived of the natural means of protection has

1. Ellis H., *The Studies in Psychology of Sex*, Part I, p. 41.
2. Sachs C., *World History of the Dance*, p. 11.

developed a superior brain, – a tool which enabled him to survive all sorts of heavy odds and led him ultimately to be the master of the situation. He appears to have used this tool to improve upon the heritage of dancing from very early times, according to the sharpness it had achieved in the course of physical and cultural evolution. Thus, the development of dance is the history of the capacity and sharpness of the human brain from one point of view, which is clearly reflected in the forms which dance has assumed in various cultures.

The earliest information regarding this significant change in dance motivation comes to us from the rock paintings created by primitive man tens of thousands of years ago in what are now France and Spain " Almost all the animals portrayed are those on which Cro-magnon man lived. The few exceptions are the animals that were feared."[1] When we think of the almost inaccessible wallspace, where some of those paintings are drawn, we can infer that they hoped to receive considerable benefit for their labour. What else can it be other than magic ? The pictures at Cogul ( Spain ) are said to represent a dance. There are masked figures and it is noteworthy that the mask is of a reindeer. Some of them are moveing in a lively fashion and may well be the dancers who performed in the very caves where the drawings were made.[2]

Amongst primitive peoples of all times ceremonial dancing has been considered a matter of great importance and used frequently as a means of sympathetic magic. If our contemporary ancestor wants to kill a bear he goes through all the performance of hunting as a ritualistic dance and often wears some part of the animal skin. Dancing of this type is seen in a well-developed stage in early tribal cultures. To understand clearly and precisely the role of dance in these societies, it would be helpful to indicate the important occasions or the stages in the average social life of primitive man and to show how the intense feelings aroused on these occasions were sought to be expressed by suitable dances. Such occasions may be classified as under : —

1. Davison Dorothy, *Men of the Dawn*, p. 114.
2. *Ibid.*, P. 117.

(1) Birth, (2) initiation, (3) sex attraction and marriage, (4) hunting, (5) war, (6) sickness and (7) funeral.

Birth. Birth like death is a mystery to the savage. On such an occasion of vital importance, some aid with supernatural significance is essential to facilitate delivery. Homeopathic or imitative magic was frequently resorted to for this purpose. "The Kayans of Sarawak perform a dance for this purpose. A female friend or a near relative of the labouring woman performs a dance, which includes the dressing of a bundle of cloth in the form of an infant. With this she dances before placing the dummy in the type of cradle which a Kayan woman usually carries on her back."[1]

Initiation. Every person born in a modern society automatically becomes a responsible member of it on coming of age. No special notice is taken of this occasion. Primitive societies, on the contrary, attach special significance to this occasion. The admittance of young persons of either sex to the full status of a responsible member of the group is to them a matter of great importance and as such they take particular care to vest the occasion with significant ceremonials. The initiation ceremonies found in various primitive societies are a clear evidence of this fact. The elaborate dance-movements associated with these ceremonies are almost everywhere primarily intended to guarantee two important functions, viz., to grant protection to the novice from the harm that might be done to him by the evil hostile spirits at this critical juncture, and to equip him with adequate sexual power to ensure healthy progeny.[2] Initiation dances are the primary means by which this protection and power are imparted to the new member.

In the final stage of the initiation ceremony of the Andamanese the novice is annointed with red paint; and preparations are made for a great dance. An older man takes his place at the sounding board. Women sit near the board and the novice is placed near the centre of the dancing ground in company with five or six men. The man at the sounding board sings a song for which he beats time with his foot. Women help by singing the chorus and clapping their hands on their

1. Hambly W. D., *Tribal Dancing and Social Development*, p. 22.

2. See Frazer J., *Golden Bough-Aftermath*, p. 426.

thighs. Each dancer flexes his hips so that his back is nearly horizontal, then with bent knees he leaps from the ground with both feet, showing great energy in keeping time to the sounding board. The dance is repeated several times, until the youth is tired out. At the conclusion of the ceremony the novice receives a new name and henceforth it is considered insulting to use his boyish title.[1]

"Among Yao, one of the native tribes of British Central Africa, at the time of seclusion, the girls are annointed with oil mixed with medicine and their heads are shaved after they have been dressed in bark cloth. Towards the end of the ceremony the girls carry over their heads a roof or a model of a house. Thus they symbolise their future position as the pillars of the house. The whole proceeding is called being danced into womanhood."[2]

The Heikum - a Bushmen tribe of South West-Africa performs girl's puberty ceremony in which the girl is isolated in a small round hut at the onset of her first menstruation. A menstruation dance is arranged, and is repeated for three or four days in succession. Certain other rites also are performed and after the ceremony is over the girl attains the status of a woman and is eligible for marriage.[3]

Sex-attraction and marriage. Considering the fact that marriage is primarily a sexual relationship, the importance of the factor of sex-attraction in choosing a mate cannot be ignored. The modern societies do not frankly admit the importance of this factor owing to the perverted view they take of sex, nor do they take necessary steps to assure its proper control. Sex is left to be governed by blind irrational prejudices with the untold harm the practice often brings. The primitive poeple had in this matter a sounder practice than the modern people. The immense power of this deep-seated biological tendency in the constitution of man, was instinctively taken proper care of in a way beneficial to the

1. See Brown A., *The Andaman Islanders*, p. 100.

2. Werner A., *The Native Tribes of British Central Africa*, pp. 126-127.

3. See Schapera I., *The Khoisan Peoples of South Africa* (Bushmen and Hottentots) (1930), pp. 120-121.

individual and the society. Proper sexual selection was facilitated through the medium of group dances which provided ample opportunities to the young members of both the sexes to display their sexual charm, capacity and grace in a wholesome and natural way.

The description of the dance of Melanesian girls serve as an illustration. "The rhythm of dance is further exemplified by the movement of the girl dancers, which consists essentially of a slow rocking movement of the pelvis on the thighs each leg being alternately slightly flexed and the heel being lifted from the ground. The muscles of the back give a rotatory movement to the pelvis causing the petticoats to swish from side to side. When dancing in columns the movement is usually slow, but in solo dances so violent that the strips of the petticoat tied over the right hip fly up in a spray of fibres allowing the tattoo on the buttock and the thighs to be seen."[1]

"The suitor in New Guinea speaks no words but on convenient occasions he dances before the girl making athletic bounds and going through the movements of spearing and the like."[2]

Hunting. An important type of primitive dance found almost everywhere is the mimetic dance. It seems to be fairly certain that this type of dance is a survival of the ancient symbolic magic intended to increase the supply of game, the evidence of which is clearly noticed in rock-paintings of the Cro-magnon man[3].

When the North American Indians are unable to secure a game for a long time, they perform the 'buffalo' dance. This dance must be continued without interruption till the animals appear. There are therefore, many relays of performers so arranged that one set may at once replace exhausted dancers, who continue in the ring until a state of complete collapse is reached.

"Each dancer is clad in a buffalo robe complete with head and horns, and in addition he must carry bow, arrows and a

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1. Seligman C. G., *The Melanesians of British New Guinea*, p. 154.
2. Ellis H., *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Part I-ii, p. 43.
3. See Davison Dorothy, *Men of the Dawn*, p. 114.

lance. Drums are violently beaten, rattles shaken and during the whole ceremony, there is a continuous singing accompanied by mimetic dancing in imitation of the movement of the buffaloes. Fast and furious becomes the dancing, until exhausted performers bending beneath the weight of their robes would fein retire. This however, may not be done except by a special formal method sanctioned by custom. An exhuasted performer halts suddenly and bends low beneath the weight of his equipment at which point an onlooker draws his bow and pretends to shoot the tired dancer, who falls to the ground simulating the death agony of a buffalo. Knives are drawn by several spectators who rush to the scene, go through the motions of skinning the animal and finally bear the exhausted performer from the arena. As soon as a report of the approaching herd is reached, the dance terminates and without any delay a hunt is organized."[1]

The War-dance. Primitive societies were ever in danger of being attacked by unfriendly tribes and had, therefore, to equip the members with adequate training and to keep them in readiness. The medium through which this training was imparted was the war-dance, which in one form or another is found in all primitive communities.

Primitive man never took to any formal military training as is the modern practice. All the physical and psychological qualities required for war were developed through special types of group-dances. These dances which could never be separated from music intended to arouse immediate psycho-physical excitement required for attacking the enemy also served to develop other necessary qualities like courage, daring, pugnacity, endurance, skill, discipline, leadership, organizational capacity and group spirit. Frequent performances of these dances even when there was no immediate danger of war kept the members ready to meet any emergency. It must also be noted that in primitive societies the war-dances served the additional purpose of sexual selection. It is a recognised fact that amongst some animals sexual selection takes place as a result of fighting between the contesting males—the females witnessing the fight and submitting to the victorious male.[2]

1. Hambly W., *Tribal Dancing and Social Development*, pp. 213--214.
2. See Briffault R., *The Mothers*, Vol. 1, p. 182.

Amongst primitives, elements of this practice are evident and the opportunities for sexual selection in this manner were provided by the war-dances.

But the most important motive behind these dances as in many others was the belief in symbolic magic. The element of mimicry which was always present had a great magical significance. The movements imitating the killing of enemies were believed to help the dancers in killing the real enemies.

"Among the Thompson Indians of British Columbia when the men were on the war-path, the women performed dances at intervals. These dances were believed to ensure the success of the expedition. The dancers flourished their knives, threw long sharp-pointed sticks forward or drew sticks with hooked ends repeatedly backwards and forwards. Throwing the sticks forward was symbolic of piercing or warding off the enemy and drawing them back was symbolic of drawing their own men from danger."[1] This custom is based on the belief that victory will fall to the side of those whose wives danced and sang the most and above all danced and sang at the very moment of battle.[2]

Sickness. Owing to the predominently scientific outlook of the modern age most of the beliefs prevalent in primitive and ancient societies are now regarded as mere superstitions. Primitive man believed that the visible physical world was surrounded by an invisible spirit world inhabited by supra-physical beings beneficent as well as hostile and that these beings could influence him to his benefit or harm. The difficulties and calamities in life were supposed to be caused by the malignant spirits.[3] Sickness, for example, was considered to be due to the influence of the evil spirits of the spirit-world. Primitive people, therefore, took proper care to protect themselves from the harmful influences of evil spirits by methods intended to prevent these influences from affecting sick persons. It was not considered easy or safe for ordinary persons to contact this spirit-world; only a few specialised in this art and it was

1. Frazer J., *Golden Bough*, p.27.
2. See Frazer J., *Golden Bough-Aftermath*, p. 23.
3. See *ibid.*, p. 425.

through them that protection from the evil influences of the spirit-world was sought. These persons had acquired special training by learning traditional methods of contacting the spirit-world such as magical incantations, special types of dances, use of certain musical instruments, etc. The performance of such dances, accompanied by the magical incantations and the sound of the drum was supposed to put them in contact with the spirit world and to control the beings and the forces of that world. These dances are found in all parts of the world which is a clear indication of the strong belief of primitive peoples in the spirit-world and supra-physical entities inhabiting these worlds.

"Among primitive tribes in Siberia, the medicine man or shaman is the most important person; and of greater significance than his robes and amulets is his musical drum whose notes produce in the shaman a hypnotic trance during which he communicates with the spirit-world."[1]

Among the Ba Thonga tribe of Portuguese East Africa there prevails a peculiar dancing ceremony, which has for its object the location of an evil spirit or influence. For purposes of divination people are gathered in the principal village and when all are assembled the diviner enters carrying in hand the magical whip and assegai. He commences a circling dance, which is accompanied with hand-clapping by the spectators. Wilder and more vigorous becomes the dancing, until the diviner, in a state of ecstacy flourishes his whip, rushes hither and thither, pauses, sniffs the air, as if trying to locate the evil spirit and finally rushes towards a hut, in the floor of which he plants the assegai. The dwelling is carefully searched for evidence of black magic, which has been in all probability deposited by the diviner himself. The owner of the hut is disgraced and in order to prevent recurrence of sickness and death within the community the charm is publicly burnt.[2]

Funeral dances. The primitive men believed that after death the spirit leaves the body, but it was likely to return

1. Hambly W. D., *Tribal Dancing and Social Development* (1926), p.30.
2. See *ibid.*, pp. 255-257.

and create trouble and disturbance to other members of the family or the community.To prevent this from happening,primitive societies evolved elaborate dances. These dances were intended to prevent the departed spirit from returning to trouble the family or the society, as well as to ensure a safe journey.

The Todas of the Nilgiri hills in India perform a dance at the funeral of a male. The men only dance. In the dancing a tall pole is used. They dance within the circular wall surrounding the funeral hut. They form a circle and dance round in slow steps. One man speaks out the name of the buffalo which was slaughtered before the dance began and another repeats the name. Then the first man says 'hau! hau!' which the second man repeats.

After some time one of the men takes the tall pole and they dance in a similar way, taking it with them as they dance. (i. e. they do not dance round the pole.)[1]

The funeral dance of the Aruntas of Australia provides a better illustration. Each member of the party carries with him a shield and a spear-thrower. They pay a visit to the camp where the man had died and subsequently burnt and dance round the charred remains beating the air with their spear-throwers in an unusual position. After some time they run in the grave and shouting 'ba-au' in a prolonged manner jump upon the grave into which the spirit was supposed to have fled and dance wildly. They dance backward and forward, on and around the grave shouting 'wha! wha!' and beating the air downwards to drive the spirit down, while with their feet they stamp upon and break the sticks with which a newly made grave is always covered. When these are thoroughly broken the dancing ceases.[2]

The significance of folk-dance and the high place it occupied in tribal life is thus quite manifest as the emotions which are generally aroused on important occassions during the life-cycle of the primitive man find their expression through it. We further see its importance as an institution which served many of the vital needs of the early societies.

1. See Rivers W., *The Todas*, p. 378.
2. See Spencer, Sir Baldwin, *The Aruntas* (1927), pp. 437-438.

# VII

## ANALYSIS OF MOTIF

Changes even in well-established institutions become inevitable when reason throws belief into the background as the guiding factor for human actions. The institution of dance has been no exception. With the advance of civilization the necessity of dancing was no more keenly felt as other ways of achieving the same objectives, and thought to be rational, were discovered. The result was that dancing in advanced groups either fell in disuse and disrepute or it branched off in the field of aesthetics and developed in art-form, as in the ballet and other exhibition dances, on the one hand, and in the field of athletics exhibiting feats of strength, skill, stamina and Yogic culture on the other. In course of time, the magico-religious significance of dance was nearly thrown into oblivion, its recreational aspect being brought into prominence.

In tracing the themes we thus come across the first hurdle placed before us by the past. The present makes the task still more difficult. Primitive people are conservative and orthodox and they are not easily susceptible to outside influences. There are hill-tribes in Maharashtra which are still in a primitive stage. But continuous contact with advanced groups which has been growing during the last century has effected a number of changes in the customs and manners of these normally conservative and orthodox people. They have all along tried to adopt the ways of the people whom they considered as their superior and to discard or disown whatever the latter did not have or approve of. Group mixed-dancing, for example, was common in some of the hill-tribes, specially the Bhils, the Ka Thakurs and the Malhar Kolis; but now it is found only in the interior; and it is doubtful if after a few years it would be in vogue even there. Such of the tribesmen as have been in the town disown mixed-dancing because they

are conscious that if the townsmen do not exactly ridicule it, they neither have it nor do they approve of it. Similar is the case with other dances. The Malhar Kolis living in the vicinity of towns have evinced such a strong desire to pass off as Kunbis who form the respectable majority of the surrounding area, that not only have they changed their name Malhar Kolis to Malhar Kunbis but, as if to give an earnest of their Kunbihood, they have discarded their own dances in favour of those of the Kunbis. The *tāmāshā* of the northern part of Ratnagiri district is another illustration. Within the last five or six years the people have replaced their *tāmāshā* forms by the new ones borrowed from cities. One has therefore to be very cautious in attributing particular types of dance movements and forms to particular groups. Traditional observances followed faithfully on dancing occasions and the purport of the dancing songs, however, go a long way in helping us through these seemingly unsurmountable difficulties. At times the theme is difficult to get at. But such cases are rare. In the majority of cases, the theme being strikingly apparent inferences can be drawn with a fair degree to certainty. In the light of these remarks we shall try to analyse the various dances with reference to the theme.

As we have seen, the first dance of the Hindu year on the Ghatside is a dance-cum-battle by women of two villages arrayed on the opposite banks of the village river. Each party hurls abuses at the other. At places even stones are pelted. The party which retires first is considered to have been defeated, it being believed that the winners would be blessed with abundant crop, the next season. It is obvious from the belief inspiring the dance that is has significance as a fertility rite.

### The *dindi* dance.

The devotees of the *vārkarī* cult engage in this dance while going to a temple of Vithoba. Dance, as we have seen creates ecstasy and also is an outcome of ecstasy. The rhythmic beat and the highpitched sonorous sound of the *tāḷs*, and the chanting of the names of Jnyānobā and Tukārām, backed

up by religious fervour suggest that the dance belongs to the latter type.

**The *kala* dance.**

The *Kālā* dance of the *Gokulāshṭamī* day is a fertility dance. During the dance the participants pray for plenty of milk and milk-products. Profuse use of milk, curds and butter-milk, even to the extent of pouring these over the dancing group is made on this occasion. Each participant carries home a small piece of the broken *hanḍī* which is believed to increase the milk-supply of the family. These practices are a sure indication of the motif.

The *Govindā* dance is more or less of a processional type and the songs sung express the joy of the return of Lord Krishna to *Gokul*. But the style is more of a martial and challenging nature rather than the buoyant expression of joy. The reason is not far to seek. The noted warlike aptitude of Maharashtra finds an expression in the dance. The opportunity is also seized to bring party-feuds to a head, hostile groups engaging in a hand-to-hand fight even today. Some of the songs challenge the opponents and ridicule their strength. Whatever the origin, this dance has assumed the form of a war-dance today. The swinging of the clubs and the marshalling of the lathis used in this dance also support this view.

**The *mangalagour* dances.**

The *mangaḷāgour* dances are an adjunct to the worship of the Goddess Gouri. The worship is observed for five years by newly married women to ensure a happy married life. *Phugaḍī* dance is obligatory to every worshipper on this occasion. Lord Krishna is described in the *purāṇas* as playing *rās* and *phugaḍī* with the *gopīs* though these dances had no reference to the *mangalāgour* occasion then. *Rās* in the form of *zimmā* is played even today, though only females participate in the dance. The songs of *zimmā* confirm its identity with the *rās*.

The dance *nāch-go-ghumā* is more realistic, the subject

being of everyday occurrence namely, the lack of paraphernalia proper for appearing in the public.

The *kombḍā* dance is a mimetic dance. The name and the movements are a clear indication. The *pingā* and *bas-phugaḍī* seem to offer a test of stamina. The song and the movements of the *kāthoṭkānā* dance refer to a critical phase in woman's life namely, the delivery. It is certainly imitative with, possibly, an educative purpose behind it. The rest of the dances are imitative, the movements making explicit what the songs convey.

### The *Gour* dance.

This dance is performed with great zeal by the agriculturist classes of Konkan. Early *nāglī* crop is ready by this time. In fact, everyone tries to reserve some plot for the cultivation of this crop, which is known as *Gourīchī nāchaṇī*. This nomenclature leads one to think of this dance as one held in honour of the agricultural deity. But neither the songs nor any of the observances or movements substantiate this view. The more plausible explanation of this dance should, therefore be that it is a leisure-time recreational activity. By this time the agriculturist has finished transplantation and is now free for the duration of the festival, at the end of which the harvesting season usually begins. It is but natural that he should utilise this rest-interval to make merry. It is worth noting that the agriculturists on the Ghatside, who are not free from their work by this time, do not have any dancing on this occasion nor do they consider this as an important festival. They have their *dashāvatārs* and other forms of recreation after the harvest. We have therefore, to look upon this occasion, as the celebration of the fact of hard work being over.

### *Sarvapitri Amavasya* dancing

*Sarvapitrī Amāvāsyā* day which, as we have seen is dedicated to the manes is celebrated with dance by some hill-tribes. The dances are not specific and have no more significance than the rejoicings of a galla day.

## The *Mahalaxmi* dancing.

The *Mahālaxmī* dance better known as *ghāgar phunkaṇe* is exclusively practised by Chitpavan women and is performed only on the *Mahālaxmi* day. It is noteworthy that its form is peculiar and not met with in other dances of Maharashtra. It is clear from the procedure that it is intended to inspire possession. The fact that, after one of the ladies is possessed, others stop dancing and start asking questions about the unkown, clearly shows that it is a 'divination' dance.

## The *Divali* dances.

As we have seen, the *Divāḷī* dances are observed only by hill-tribes. A number of them are danced to the *ṭārapī* tune. These dances can be classified in two groups namely, (1) imitative and (2) representative of cultural ideas. Imitation again is of something either from the plant world or from the animal world.

*Huraṇācha nāch* and *gunjavāyachā nāch* are imitations of human actions, while in peacock dance and the *lāvarā* dance, the participants imitate the movements of the respective birds. *Bhāt-bhālaṇyāchā nāch* is a dance in which the swaying of a standing ripe paddy crop is imitated. The rest of the dances namely, *ghārīchā nāch*, *govāyachā nāch*, *salāmīchā nāch* seek to represent cultural ideas like group feeling, unity, solidarity, leadership etc. *Bhuī-phugaḍī*, like *bas-phugaḍī*, is a stamina test.

## *Shimga* dances.

The *Hoḷī* festival is observed with greater zeal in the Konkan than on the Ghatside. The lighting of the *hoḷī* and its worship, which is invariably accompanied at the end by the loud utterance of a word signifying female reproductive organ is also the dances performed during the festival offer sufficient evidence to show that the festival was formerly meant as a fertility rite. Amongst the Bhils a man dressed as a woman, bends over a man, lying on the ground with his face up and in that

position they clap their hands, and move slightly upward and downward. In another dance, the 'women' bend down while the men persue them. The *Rādhā* and the *deṛā* dances of the Kunbis are other examples. Erotic sentiment and actions pervade the whole dance atmosphere. Even the *Koḷyācha nāch* which is purely an imitation dance also has this important trait. *Gomu* is the central figure of the dance and most of the songs are addressed to her.

The dances performed during the Shimga festival in the southern part of the Ghatside are very few and much different. Men dressed like lions, tigers, monkeys and bears go through the streets, exhibiting their dancing skill. *Lezim* and sword dances are also performed. The sword-dance and the movements in other dances are clearly a survival of the martial past. Religious sentiment is practically absent. There are no Shimga dances in other parts on the Ghatside except perhaps that of the Bhils.

**Dances on Special Occasions.**

To trace the motif of the dances performed on special occasions is comparatively less difficult. The persons who perform such dances, earn the privilege by heredity or by special initiation. *Kaḍak Laxmī* is a good illustration of the former, while *bhagat*, the indispensable shaman of the backward groups is a good example of the latter.

The *bhagat* is supposed to have mastered the art of divination and he is consulted when the explanation of a disease or a phenomenon lies beyond the ken of the people, The sanctity of the place, the instruments and the other paraphernalia and the rigorous observances which the *bhagat* meticulously follows contribute to create a tense atmosphere, the tenseness being intensified by the convulsive movements of the *bhagat*. No wonder that under such conditions, the onlookers treat the utterances of the *bhagat* as oracular. Similar is the case with *Kaḍak Laxmī*, *virs*[1] and persons possessed by the deities presiding over small-pox.

1. *Virs* who represent ancestors, at times get possessed and are consulted and prayed for progeny.

The *Kumbhār* dance on the day of obsequies is very typical. The dance movements are not very different from those of the basic movements in *Rādhā* dance. As the purpose of his dance is to induce possession in one of the observers, contrary to other dances, the dancer goes on narrating weird stories from the *purāṇas*. As his dance gets more and more vigorous and the movements brisk, some near relative of the deceased gets possessed. It is believed that the spirit of the deceased has really entered the body of the possessed, if the latter correctly tells the flower which the Kumbhar has in mind. Enquiries regarding the unfulfilled desires of the deceased are then made.

The Malhar Kolis, when there is a drought, dance to ascertain if rain is coming. It is, however, more a dance-ritual than dance proper. Backward class children from Nasik and Nagar districts dance to invoke rain. The pouring of water on their heads clearly suggests sympathetic magic. Similar is the case with the Chitpavans who keep an idol immersed in water to invoke rain. Here, however, the dance is an adjunct to *bhajan* which is essential.

The moribund dance of *dhenḍe nāchavṇe* which once was very popular seems to be the survival of the custom of marriage by capture. It also served the purpose of introducing affines in an informal way.

*Dashāvatār* or *bohāḍā*, the ballet-type dance, is practised as a protective measure. Epidemics, calamities and other pests are believed not to touch a village that performs this ballet. As in possession, the sanctity of the place, the instruments and the make-up of the actor, all go to create an atmosphere in which the actor feels himself identified with the role he is playing. The awe-stricken spectators also believe that he is possessed by the deity whom he represents. This belief, like other religious beliefs, is weakening day by day, the ballet being more and more looked upon as a recreational activity.

# VIII

## REGIONAL AFFINITIES

It is natural for one to expect more homogeneity or common substratum in folk-dances than in folk-songs and other forms of linguistic folk-culture. Our next task, therefore, is to try to unravel the affinities of Maharashtrian folk-dances with those of other Indian regions. In Maharashtra dancing is much more practised by the hill-tribes than by other groups. These tribes, Sir Athelstane Baines[1] tells us, belong to the western branch of the *Kol* tribes of the central Belt. He further states that the other three or four small tribes of the northern Sahyadri almost contiguous to the Bhils, Mavachas, Nayaks and others of the western Belt possibly are connected with some of them, though they have no traditions as to their origin[2]. It will be interesting therefore to compare the dances of these tribes of northern Sahyadri with those of the Santals, the largest of the *Kol* communities.

Comparing the facts given in the general description of the Santals and the detailed description of their dances, in Appendix A, with the study of the hill-tribes of the northern Sahyadri namely, the Katkari, the Thakur, the Warli and the Malhar Koli, we find that there is nothing common in their dancing which is noteworthy. The occasion, the dress and musical instruments, the movments and formation, songs and music– none of these evince any similarity. We may make some allowances as far as the occasions are concerned, though the principal occasions should tally; but in matters of dress, musical instruments, formation and especially in movements, we do expect precise affinity. It is important to note that they have no significant common trait. The only common feature is that both of them have a number of dances and the topics are from their respective surroundings. Thus, for example,

1. *Ethnography of India*, P. 122.
2. *Ibid.*, P. 124.

in the *tārapī*-dance, the hill-tribes of Maharashtra imitate the peacock and the *lavrā* birds, while the Santals imitate the vulture and the serpant. But this type of parallelism does not in any way tend to establish an affinity. It appears, therefore, that the dances are quite distinct, and in the present state of our knowledge we cannot postulate any common origin.

The musical instruments of the Santals particularly the flute, the *mādal* and the *nagārā* and the movements of the *mādal*-player have a close parallel in the *Kathākali* dance of Malabar. The *mridangam*-player of the *Kathākali* reminds one of the Santal *mādal*-player. The *paigan* of the Santals is also used by classical dancers[1]. It is however, quite likely that these tribes might have adopted the dances of the people they came in contact with. This contention is supported by the fact that we see the Mundas, Oraons, Gonds, and Santals adopting the dances of neighbouring tribes.

Though the technique of dance does not show any affinity, the place of dancing in the culture of these people is the same. Thus both the groups used to have dances in which males and females danced together. They had and still have a number of dances pertaining to their surrounding topics. Both have dances which are treated as obligatory by custom. Dancing is also resorted to as a pastime. Both love to have liquor at the time of dancing. The tendency to disown mixed dancing is also common. All this tends to prove that they are more or less on the same culture-level, and are undergoing the same phase of social evolution. It also shows how, under changed conditions, these traditional dances which once were pregnant with religious significance, are now being utilized for recreation.

On a higher level of culture, however, we come across at least some forms of dancing, wherein we can find certain common features which help us to establish some sort of affinity. The *kātkhel* dance of Maharashtra, for example, has the elements of the *kāthi* dance of Bengal described by G. S. Dutt.[2]

1. I had an opportunity of witnessing the performance of a classical Sinhalese dance at Shantiniketan. The *paigan* he had put on was of the type the Santal uses.

2. *Vide* Appendix A.

The name in both the dances is derived from the fact that the dance is performed with *kāṭhīs* (sticks) in hand. The word *khel* means 'sport' or 'play'. The important word *kāṭhī* which conveys the basic concept is exactly the same; the formation and the movements – nay – even the way of striking the sticks is also identical. The *mādal* of Bengal is slightly longer and bigger at one end than the *mridang* of Maharashtra. The accompanying musical instrument, thus, shows great affinity. Bauris who generally perform this dance are classed as field-labourers, more or less having the same occupation as that of the Kunbis of Maharashtra. This dance appears to have a countrywide distribution. In southern India we have it in the form of *kollāṭam*, in Kathiawar and Gujarat in the form of *dāndiā*.

The dance performed by the Tharus[1] of northern Bihar is another illustration. It is similar to the *Rādhā* dance of Ratnagiri district. The young boy dressed as Radha, the use of *mudrās* and the foot-work showing artistic touch, the formation, and the position of the dancer, the themes of the songs, all show a close affinity. Thus we find that there is some undercurrent running through such forms of dancing. Peoples belonging to this culture-group have come more in the contact with *pouraṇic* themes and such dances being representations of incidents from the life of Krishna, the eighth incarnation of Vishnu, it is but natural that they should reveal closer affinity. Again, the form of the dance being more or less artistic in nature, it is quite probable that the artistic elements might have been picked up from the common source, the *Bhārat Nāṭya*. The general tendency of the groups belonging to this culture-level is also analogous. They want to improve their music, they have a desire to add new songs and they strive to adopt more appropriate and artistic movements. Again, with the weakening of religious belief, both these groups, like the hill-tribes of Maharashtra, are looking upon dance as a means of recreation.

The affinities appear to be in ascending order according to the culture-level of the people. There are very few dances amongst the advanced classes of Maharashtra. *Dashāvatār*

1. *Vide* Appendix A.

is one of them which is found in different garbs not only in other provinces of India but even out of India where Hindu culture made its way. The militant atmosphere of Maharashtra, affected this dance-form to a great extent and fighting for hours had become its prominent feature. Today it is perhaps in a dilapidated condition, yet the performances and the information from other sources suggest that this dance-form must have the same origin as that of the *kathākali* of the south, *Rāmalīlā* of the north and some of the dances of Siam, Java, Bali and Ceylon. The *goph* dance of Maharashtra appears in Gujarat by the same name, while in southern India it is presented as *pinnal Kollāṭam.*

But barring these few dances, which more or less bear upon *pourāṇic* themes, the bulk of the folk-dances of Maharashtra appear to be more regional than an aspect of a homogeneous Indian unit.

Let us now see the interrelations of the dances among the various groups of Maharashtra itself.

The Ka Thakurs, the Malhar Kolis and the Warlis have exactly the same type of dance movements, the same musical instruments and the same principal occasions. The difference is only in the vigour, the Malhar Kolis heading the list, the Ka Thakurs ranking second and the Warlis coming last. Though the general rule that whenever there is leisure and liquor, dance follows applies to almost all the hill-tribes, even here we find a difference and a gradation identical with the one cited above.

The Bhils are a group by themselves. Their dancing occasions are *Divāḷī*, *Shimgā* and the obsequies. Their movements somewhat resemble the movements of the mixed dance of the Malhar Kolis. They have a Kathodi dance which is only a sarcastic presentation of the Katkari dance. Their *gherā* dance is picturesque and on this occasion their dress reminds one of the *Kāṭkheḷ* dancers.

In the next grouping may be placed the Katkaris, the Ma Thakurs, the Agris of Thana district and the Kunbis of Ratnagiri district. The Katkaris and the Ma Thakurs have the same type of drum and one sees, occasionally, a Thakur drummer accompanying a Katkari dancing party and vice

versa. Each group has its own songs, though today many are found to be common to both. The Katkari treats any time as good for dancing, while the Ma Thakur and the Agri usually do not dance after the *Divālī*. The movements of the Katkari are more vigorous than those of the Ma Thakur or the Agri.

The dress of the Kunbis is refined as is their *mridang* compared to the crude drum of the others. Their movements though the same as those of the others are more regulated and less vigorous. They do not observe *Divālī* and *Sarvapitrī* as occasions for dancing. Again their *Shimgā* dances are definitely superior to those of the hill-tribes and the Agris in many respects. In fact the Kunbis seem to be the joining link between the folk-dancers and the artistic dancers. The *tamāshā* of the Kunbis has a close parallel with the *tamāshās* of the Ghatside. The only difference lies perhaps in the pronunciation and style of speaking—a linguistic difference. The *Govīndā* dance is found only in Konkan. So too is the *kālā* dance though breaking of *handī* is a feature observed everywhere on the occasion.

Local variations concerning the *dashāvatārs* are much pronounced, though the purpose of the dance is the same all over Maharashtra. In the southern part of Ratnagiri district they have taken the form of a drama and in the central part they have assumed the form of a *tamāshā* in which these incarnations are introduced. In the north they are obsolete. On the Ghatside, on the contrary, specially in the northern part, we come across elaborate masks and other paraphernalia specifically prepared for this occasion. At present, only the warlike movements of the participants are prominent. These are also observed in the *dashāvatārs* performed in the central part of Ratnagiri district.

The *tiprī* and *goph* dances are practised by the advanced classes and are more or less the same, all over Maharashtra.

Thus we see very clearly that there are regional groups in Maharashtra itself, the main division being the Konkan and the Ghatside, the natural regions though not very pronounced. There is again another remarkable point about these dances. Many of the dances are known by the princi-

pal musical instrument used. The *ṭārapī* dance, the *dhol* dance, the *dholkīchā tamāshā*, the *tamborīchā tamāshā*, the *lezim* dance offer good illustrations. The instruments as we shall see presently indicate the culture-level.

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# IX

## DANCE AND CULTURE

We have already observed in the introduction that there are at least three groups in Maharashtra which are more or less distinct as regards cultural traits. In this chapter we shall examine the important differences in the various aspects of the dances of these groups.

The first striking difference is in the proportion of participants in the actual dance performances. Among the hill-tribes everybody except the physically disabled dances. *Songas* and feats of physical strength or skill that are introduced in between are the only individual items. Otherwise, the whole community moves in rhythm to the beat of the drum. Men and women dancing together and children trying to imitate them somewhere nearby are found in the interior even now. The tendency of the people, residing in the vicinity of a town is, however, to disown mixed dancing.

The formations of these tribes are also very simple—usually an arc approximating a straight line. The dancers have to face the drummer or the *tārapī* player who directs their movements, and the arc is the most advantageous formation for the purpose. Of late they are imitating the Kunbi and taking to circular formation, but the attempt is not yet very successful. Circular formation, which is obviously not suited to mixed dancing, seems to have been adopted by the Ma Thakur and the Katkari since they discarded mixed dancing.

The movements of these people, living a jungle life are naturally vigorous as, for example, of the Katkaris and the Malhar Kolis. Their occasional yellings are also deafening. This appears to be the direct consequence of their hunting habits. Their songs are neither lengthy nor complicated. Each beat is on a separate syllable. Moreover the poet in the hillman is not dead. Neither are emotions missed, nor is the beauty of nature left unappreciated. Their songs, as is but natural, mostly refer to their own life and surroundings.

Their opening *naman* songs are addressed to the Earth, the Sun and the Moon, and rarely to Ganapati and other *pourāṇīc* deities which are definitely a recent acquisition (14). Even a beginner enjoys his dance and even a proficient dancer is modest enough to call himself a beginner (27). The elegance of the dance depends on the ability of the dance-leader without which the dance is all confusion and chaos (17,19). Equally vital for the success of a dance is the perfect condition of the *dhol*, a broken one spoiling the dance (32). Poor as the tribals are, they still desire to don themselves in their best attire on a dancing occasion and their enthusiasm for dancing is boundless as is reflected in the assurances they give in their songs of having girded up their loins in preparation for an eagerly awaited dance (30). The women value their petty trinkets very dearly (61) and are fond of jungle flowers which are the decorations provided by Nature for them. The youths are ardent lovers and appreciate the charms of young maidens (33). The water-carrier girl and the cow-herd boy are the typical and proverbial lovers who provide a theme for many a love song (15). Even after marriage a young girl continues to be attracted by and is attached to her husband (16). The ambition of the tribal to build a storied house with tiles on looks rather ambitious (62), and his interest in cowdung in prefrence to milk clearly shows how technical culture affects the values people set on things in life (31). Far in the backwoods, his existential dependence makes for group solidarity. He values the bull without which he thinks farming impossible (28). He has a passion for hunting (59,60) and hates the forest guard who impedes his free movement in the jungle (20).

Not only their immediate surroundings form the subject-matter of their songs, but other topics, about which they have heard and seen like the casual visits of the traders, the railway trains (18), courts and lawyers (43) also have a place.

For participating in the *zenḍā* dance competitions, they nowadays use the songs of the Kunbis and other castes—songs which are usually based on *pourāṇīc* incidents. They are more particular about riddle-songs, printed booklets of which are sometimes found in their possession. The result is that

dancing is thrown in the background and knowledge about *pourāṇic* themes comes to be prized. A school-boy who can read naturally attains importance, because he can refer to books for answering the riddles. The importance of the ready-witted person is consequently on the decline, traditional knowledge being nowadays supplemented by books.

The musical instruments of the hill-tribes are not very complicated. The *ḍhol* is not played in many different *bols* but the *ṭārapī* has a separate tune for each dance. The remarkable thing about their accompaniment music is its exquisite rhythm. Their sense of rhythm is developed to such an extent, that a late-comer on joining a dancing-group mechanically takes the right step. Another outstanding feature is the tempo. It continuously increases till it reaches the peak when the dance suddenly comes to a halt.

The hillman is not very particular about his dress when he dances. He is too poor to afford any special dress. Besides youths are getting dress-conscious only in recent times. And it is only in these days that we find parties here and there using better clothes when dancing. The Bhil is an exception who uses an elaborate dress at least on one occasion.

Women are naturally particular about their dress and decoration. They try to preserve a special dress for a dance-occasion and make full use of flowers which are handy. Katkari women use even the ears of paddy corn to adorn their hair and it is artistically done.

The movements of the women though more graceful than those of men are rather monotonous. They are also not vigorous. In a mixed dance of Malhar Kolis, however, I have seen them trying their level best to keep steps with men. They did it in an admirable degree, though towards the end they had to fall out. All the movements are purely basic. The artistic forms are nearly absent. For example, there is no posing of hands or standing on toes and the play of facial muscles is completely absent. They do not depend much on musical accompaniment; clapping in most cases serves the purpose. Addition of drum and *ṭiprīs* is of course welcome, whenever available,

Although there are certain occasions like the *Divāḷī*

when these people must dance, any opportunity whenever leisure and liquor are available is as good. the Ma Thakurs, who have taken more to agriculture have a restricted period. Except on festival days, the time for dance is the night. Everybody is expected to be in his hut by dusk. And it is,therefore, more because of convenience than convention that night is preferred. The duration of the dance depends much upon the mood of the people, which in turn depends to a large extent on the adequate supply of tea, tobacco and liquor. At times, they spend nearly the whole of night in dancing and they are ready to resume their daily routine work the next morning as if nothing had happened [1]

Children require no special training to learn dance-movements and songs. They learn as they see, listen to and imitate their elders. Great pains, however,are taken to learn new songs addition of which enhances the prestige of the group who uses them. The individual also feels elated because the group is grateful to him for the new addition which is also used with advantage in competitions. It is in this manner that many *pourāṇic* songs have found their way in their repertory of songs. We thus see how folk-art means folk-education.

So far, on most occasions they danced for pleasure or for religious purposes. Their tendency today is towards imitating higher groups, who have little or no dancing amongst them. Economic considerations also are getting an upper hand, so much so, that even religious festivals are not keenly observed. The dawning of consciousness of inferiority is also clearly seen and much of the carefree and jovial attitude so necessary for being in the dancing mood is sadly lacking. The consequence is that this institution which had so far played a very important part in the life of these people is day by day withering.

Having made a general survey of the dances of the tribes residing on or near the hills, we shall now proceed to review the dances of the agriculturists from the plains below.

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1. The fatigue is not felt because the movements of the dance are such as occur in their everyday life, and the rhythm, the principal factor, is so perfect that the muscles do not feel any unnecessary strain, which invariably attends a new movement.

To the agriculturists of Konkan, Gour is the only occasion for community-dancing. In Shimga, it is the selected individuals only that have the privilege. That marks the first distinction between the hill-tribes and the agriculturists. Whereas the former have dances in which the whole community participates, the latter, belonging to a higher level of culture, have in addition to community-dancing, special dances which require selected men and special training. We shall first examine the community-dancing of the agriculturists.

The first striking feature regarding the community-dancing of these people is the very limited season. They do not start dancing before *Nāraḷī Pournimā* and generally do not dance after *Gourī-visarjan*. This means hardly a period of three weeks in the rainy season. With the hill-tribes, as we have seen, any time is good, provided there is leisure and liquor. The life of the agriculturists being more regulated and settled, they cannot indulge even in such a pleasure-giving activity as dance, *ad libitum*.

The movements of the dance are less vigorous and of a slower tempo, in contrast to the brisk and wild movements of the hillmen. It is perhaps the reflection of the steady life of a farmer. The movements of the hand deserve to be noted. The left hand is nearly steady; the right hand alone moves. In ploughing the left hand is always on the plough while the right hand, with a stick in it, is employed in guiding the bullocks. In the dance, a kerchief, generally coloured, takes the place of the drab stick. Yellings are also comparatively few and mild. They are more particular about the uniformity of movements and the circle they describe fits in the geometrical definition. It is a well-defined circle and they try to maintain it. They lack in the variety of movements, The movements and turnings though executed in strict unison appear more mechanical and stereotyped. The naturalness and the individuality of the movements which mark a hillman's dance are nearly absent. Perhaps, they are sacrificed for the sake of uniformity. Their *Govindā* dance is a community-dance of minor importance and does not differ much from the marching form of the Gour dance.

These people are very particular about their dress and

other paraphernalia. Their best clothes are displayed on the dancing occasions. The style of the dress is, however, undergoing a change day by day. The loin-cloth has given place to dhoti and pyjama which, as we have already seen, have eliminated the squatting position which was popular in the days of the loin-cloth. Formerly they used to put on the usual respectable pugrees, then came the mania for *sāphās* and, while the white caps were current during the last few years, to dance bareheaded promises to be the fashion of the near future.

The accompanying musical instruments of the agriculturist from the plains are superior to those of the hillmen. His *mridang*, for example, needs an elaborate process for preparation and special care is necessary to keep it in order. Its adjustment also needs skill and a good sense of music.

The songs sung on the occasions are mostly based on *pourānic* incidents. There are very few songs referring to their *millieu*. It has perhaps grown out of fashion to sing such songs, since published booklets do not include them. I could get only one such song and that too from an old man (11). It described the expectation of a sister from her brother and the attachment she feels for him. The younger generation is, however, keen on keeping uptodate. Subhash, Jai Hind, Āryabhūmi etc., are some of the topics that figure prominently in their latest songs (13). The songs sung at the time of *Govindā* dance are, however, quite different. They either narrate an incident from the life of Lord Krishna when he was in *Gokuḷ* or else they refer to the *Dādā* and his challenges and threats to opponent (6, 8).

For years together only one simple tune is being used. Nowadays, however, they are trying to introduce new tunes, though not with much success. It is very difficult to wipe off the effect of the old tune, which they have been accustomed to hear from their childhood. They try new tunes because they feel that it would be appreciated by the public. But when they come in full form, they still return to their old favourite tune. The forceful accent of the beat in the old tune and its simplicity appeal to their yet undeveloped sense for higher music. With the new tune one has to think on

which beat to take the right step; with the old one, steps follow the beat mechanically and no conscious effort is required.

The *Shimgā* dances of these people are more colourful. They clearly indicate a higher standard. The dance movements are appropriate to what the songs convey. Especially in the *Rādhā* and *naktā* dance, there are all action songs. The movements in some cases are so expressive that even without the accompaniment of the song, the meaning is clearly conveyed. The movements of the *naktā* dance are warlike and the paraphernalia – the sword, the shield, the bow, the dress and the mask create a sense of fear in the minds of children. The occasional shrill yellings of the *naktā* actually terrify children. The movements of the Radha, on the contrary, are graceful and refined. The footwork, the poses of the hands and the facial expressions make the observer feel that he is being led far away from the pure rustic form of dancing and is approaching the art-form.

The dress, too, of Radha, as we have seen, is particularly attended to, so that it tends to create a sense of reality. The ornaments and the costly dress are a matter of pride to the group. The instruments are also of a different nature. The *ḍaph* which serves the purpose of a *tablā* and is at the same time portable, is typical to Maharashtra. In the form of tambourine it is found perhaps all over the world. But its particular shape and use are peculiarly Maharashtrian. Other instruments, like the *vīṇā* or the *dholkī* are also of a superior type.

Many of the songs sung on the occasions express erotic sentiment whether they refer to *pourāṇic* topics or those of the good old days of the Maratha supremacy or those of our own times. Yet, there are a number of songs which do not even remotely suggest this sentiment. The songs are often lengthy and the singers adhere to the wording of the songs as strictly as possible, though some of their pronunciations sometime evoke laughter in the Marathi speaking people. Their musical standard is also of a higher level. Not only are their musical notes complex but even some of the songs are set to different classical *rāgas*.

Thus we find on a higher level of culture, a distinct

progress in the types of dance, dress, accompaniment music and the songs; and what is more striking is the desire and aptitude for improvement in these matters among higher groups. The group leaders are always out to gather new songs, to introduce new movements befitting the songs and to adopt appropriate ways of presentation. Only this year I heard a *lāvaṇī* in which Pakistan and such other living topics figured. Here again we see that folk–dance is folk–education.

If from the survey of the two groups just made, one expects to find higher form of dancing among the upper classes, one is sure to be disappointed. Only in a few places is the crude *kālā* dance performed. *Tipri* and *goph* though artistic in execution are seldom practised. The *dashāvatārs* which could have been developed into a pure ballet form, just like the *Kathākali* of Malabar is also equally neglected. Under the circumstances, one need not expect any particular attention being paid to movements, dress and the like. They are performed only because of tradition and by persons belonging to the older generation. With them, they say, the art will vanish. Today these forms are tolerated, tomorrow they may be openly jeered at. The performers are conscious of these facts and they have become thoroughly pessimistic and cynical about the future. The only ray of hope lies in the change of attitude of the people about which more will be said later.

The women-folk, however, have kept up many of their traditional dances. True it is that religious belief underlying these activities is weakening day after day and the participants are not as keen as before. But it has not reached a stage when complete extinction may be apprehended. Conservatism appears to be more deep-rooted in women as in backward groups.

Special dress and accompaniment music, these women have none. Clapping is only resorted to in *zimmā*. The movements in many dances are vigorous especially in the competitive *phugaḍī*. A desire to add new gtaceful movements is still conspicuously absent, though the means are not beyond reach.

They have a number of songs and scores of rhymed coup-

lets for *phugdī*. Most of the songs as well as the dance-forms refer to topics around them. The peculiarity of the rhymed couplets is worth noting. They express various sentiments and attitudes, according to the relation existing between the participants—a friend, a rival, an elderly respectable person, etc. Some of the couplets refer to recent developments, social and political (12,13). It is a healthy indication and speaks against stagnancy.

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# X

## EPILOGUE

Sociological study of early communities in all parts of the world has clearly revealed the vital part played by folk-dances in the social life of these communities. To a large extent, they served the purpose of an educational institution, in as much as they provided opportunities for the young to be trained to shoulder the responsibilities of tribal life.

Emotional outbursts found an easy and natural outlet in dance. Important events like the initiation of a youth, the preparation of a war or a hunt, the celebration of a victory etc., which carried emotion to a high pitch were celebrated with a dance, that being the conventional medium which offered full and satisfactory expression to the tribals. Though dance did serve the purpose of recreation, it was never thought to be so by the primitive because the magical significance was so dominating that it threw all other values into complete background. Other advantages were derived as an unconscious result only. Educational training and emotional relief were never sought after through dance. Again in the primitive stage, life was an organized whole and was never treated in compartments as is usually done today.

Societies, however, are not static; they are always changing. Change, in fact, is essential for their very existence. In the evolutionary process of societies, social institutions are affected by modification and adaptation. Acquisition of new knowledge and a different approach to causal relationship has, in the past, wrought drastic changes in social thought and practice. The magical significance attached to dancing lost its ground in course of time. New religious faiths came into existence. In some, dancing was tabooed, in others it

was tolerated, in few it was made a part of religion itself. Dancing survived at this stage more as a recreational activity than anything else, with a background of dominating religious sentiment.

New means of recreation both passive and active have greatly affected the recreational aspect of dance. Ball-room dancing still attracts people because of sex-impulse. Ballet and such other forms of artistic dancing continue to hold on because of the aesthetic pleasure one derives from them, both by witnessing and by actual participation.

Folk-dance, however, which once was a vital element in the community-life of the people, seems to-day to be on the eve of total extinction, at least as far as the folk-dance of Maharashtra is concerned. Our social surroundings are so much revolutionized during the last century, that a number of old social institutions have lost much of their social value. Under the British regime, it was a fashion with the educated to condemn everything that savoured indigenous. Folk-dance offers, perhaps, the best illustration. It owes its present moribund condition not to any lack of functional value, as we shall presently see, but its being denied the social status, it once enjoyed, by the sophisticated society of today. The condemnation of folk-dance by the educated might have to some extent been to explain away their physical weakness which dissuaded them from actively participating in a dance. The weakening of the once dominating religious belief has also substantially contributed to depreciate its social value.

The magical and the religious significance of folk-dance may conveniently be ignored in any rational discussion of the functional values of dance. From a physiological point of view we see that the folk-dance offers a wide range of movements— bending, hopping, skipping, squatting, sliding, arms-swinging and the like—involving big muscles. Such movements, when organised as dances can be carried on three or four times as long without arousing any feeling of fatigue or monotony as in formal gymnastics. If properly coordinated hey can be utilised as an aesthetically satisfying and interest-

ing form of physical exercise. Again from the biological point of view also such neuro-muscular movements being racially old and fitted in with man's expressive life, are no mere manipulated permutations of movements. The folk-dance combinations, therefore, should be preferred on these biological grounds to the unselected or even the physiologically selected movements.

More important again is perhaps the relaxation aspect far-reaching effects of which have not yet been properly appreciated. The value of dance as a form of exercise and recreation is appreciated by many, but few have realised the value of relaxation and abandon that dance offers. It can thus serve a pressing need of to-day. In games we forget everything except the game and all our efforts are directed towards doing our best to win the game. True it is that our brain is relieved for the time being from thinking about our everyday routine. But even then the brain is not completely relaxed as it has to concentrate on the game. As in a game, we forget in dancing our own everyday world and are lifted on to a higher one, carried away by rhythmic movements. In course of time the movements become so mechanical that there is no need for the thinking process to function. The exhileration we feel makes us forget ourselves and the world as well. The dance, thus has an invaluable asset in that it provides the relaxation for brain. This is distinctly brought out in the *lezim* dance, which even without any external aid of musical accompaniment provides the necessary rhythm. Apropos it may be added that for this motivation, if not for any other, *lezim* deserves a place in any well-balanced programme of physical education.

There is full scope for self-expression in dance and at the same time there is no individual competition, as the rhythm of each goes into the making of the rhythm of the whole. While moving in a group for a common purpose the individuality is merged in a common group-feeling. It is then 'we' and not 'I' that dominates the show. A successful execution of dance, *gopli* for example, brings the same amount of satisfaction to every member of the group as it is the effort of

every individual that claims the credit. A winning team, on the other hand, is equally jubilant over its success but, more often than not, the joy is marred by individual discrimination and differentiation. Rivalries, petty jealousies and such other undesirable reactions which are likely to follow activities like athletics and games are totally absent in group-dancing. These remarks, however, are not intended to belittle healthy competitive spirit but only to emphasize the need to encourage activities which offer equal joy and satisfaction to all the participants.

Mixed group-dancing of an elementary type serves another vital need. Inferiority of muscular strength that hampers girls in mixed games, or anatomical drawbacks from which they suffer in activities like running are no handicaps to them in mixed group-dancing. Grace and rhythm being the principal factors in a dance, girls may even excel boys in this activity. Mixed group-dancing, again, will accelerate social intercourse and solve the problem of physical education teachers in co-educational schools and colleges of providing activities to suit both the sexes. *Tiprī*, *goph*, *rās* and *lezim* are some of the dances which can be introduced with advantage.

The introduction of folk-dances in schools and colleges will have an electrical effect on the masses when they see that some of the activities which they are wont to perform and which have been looked down upon are also practised by educated people. They will no more think that they are doing something that is not fashionable amongst the educated. We will thus be saving a great backsliding. The rich cultural heritage which has been falling into disrepute and degeneration will then have an opportunity to flourish. The folk-dance, with healthy additions and modifications, will then appear in a brighter and more attractive form with a greater appeal for the common man. Society can ill afford to neglect such a valuable legacy. It can and should draw upon it for different forms of dance and upon the still richer heritage, the classical Indian dance, though the latter is ouside the scope of our present enquiry and referred to here only in-

cidentally. So it is up to the educated indirectly and to the institutions of physical education directly to see that these activities are rejuvinated and given due social recognition.

There is another offshoot of folk-dance the *tamāshā* of Maharashtra, which is already being recognized as a potent instrument of mass-education.

The familiarity of incidents presented, simplicity and directness of language, naive presentation, coarseness of humour, sarcastic references to social and economic inequality, lack of artistic euphemisms and euphuisms and obscenity in an overt form are the principal factors that have given the *tamāshā* the popularity that it enjoys to-day among the masses. The common man sees his own problems, his own hopes and aspirations, his own pleasures, sorrows and miseries presented in the *tamāshā* which, naturally, has a direct appeal for him.

The lewd and obscene in the *tamāshā* deserves to be condemned beyond a cavil, but with this qualification, the institution ought to be encouraged and utilized for educating the masses. Here, again, the educated must come forward to prevent this powerful vehicle of mass education from degenerating into low and unworthy recreation.

Important festive occasions occuring during the cycle of a year can conveniently be utilized for organizing folk-dances. Wrestling tournaments are traditionally held even to-day on many of these occasions. It is thus easy to introduce this new activity as much of the organizational work has to be done even to-day for the wrestling tournaments. Temple funds can be diverted for the organization of dances. For discouraging petty jealousies and rivalries and encouraging group-feeling, it should be made obligatory for the participants in a wrestling bout to join in a common dance-rally. *Lezim* which is already popular with *ākhāḍās* participating in the wrestling tournaments should come in handy for the purpose.

To sum up. the age-old institution of folk-dance that originally attracted people because of its magical significance--a significance which later faded into background with the

advent of new religious beliefs and consequent sceptic attitute to magical practices, deserves to be encouraged to-day on purely rational grounds—because of the physiological, psychological, recreational, social and educational advantages derived from it. And it is the duty of the State and leaders in the field of physical education to organize and integrate the traditional folk-dances which, as we have seen, are capable of satisfying some of the pressing needs of the individual and of society.

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# APPENDIX A

## 1. The Santals.

The Santals are found at intervals, sometimes in considerable masses, but more generally much scattered in a strip extending about 350 miles from the Ganges to the Baitarani and comprising the Santal parganas, Bhagalpur, Birbhum, Bancura, Hazaribagh, Manbhum, Mayurbhanj and Balsore districts. Santal Paraganas may now be regarded as the nucleus of the tribe.

The Santals had the nomadic habit of migration, but of late they are more or less a settled tribe. They are very careful in the construction of their homesteads. Their huts have well-raised plinths and snug varandahs and have a neat, even a gay appearance. They paint their walls in alternate broad strips red, white local and black– clay and charcoal furnishing the pigments. The houses are kept perfectly clean and it is a matter of pride to the Santal housewife who spends every spare moment in keeping it clean and neat.

The Santal in a prosperous season leads a gay life. He is busy either with his cultivation, or playing on his flute and dancing with the girls, or is engaged in a hunt. He is very fond of hunting wherein he evinces great skill and endurance.

Nothing is perhaps more interesting to Santals than dancing. They would never miss a single occasion. For a comparatively smaller amount they would leave their work to give a dancing performance. In 1942 they gave me a performance for over three hours in which nearly seventy-five men and women participated and were jubilant to receive a five rupee note. Formerly the Santals used to visit fairs in numbers, where they gave performances in which young men and women danced together before the public. They do not do so now, because they feel it below their dignity to allow their young women to dance in public. In their own Basti, however, they give a performance even to an outsider without any reserve.

The musical instruments used in their dances are the *mādal*, the flutes and the cymbals. The *mādal* like *mridang* is cylindrical in shape, broad at one end and tapering towards the other. Both the ends are covered with goat-skin. It is nearly two feet in length and the diameter at the broader end is 12 inches while at the other, it is only 9 inches. The *nagārā* is also used and is beaten with sticks. Instead of jingles the males use *paigan*. It is made of brass and is hollow with a number of small brass shots inside. It is oval-shaped and is generally 9 inches by 4½ inches. The men also wear a leather belt round the waist to which a number of small bells are attached.

The Santals, specially the women are very particular about their dancing attire. The women, as a rule, were white sarees and decorate their hair with flowers or young sprouts in a very artistic manner.

Singing in low pitch accompanies all dances of women.

**Dance 1.**

The musicians start playing, taking small rounds in the centre. Women arrange themselves in an arc holding each others hand, fingers interlocked. They move slowly to the right, taking two steps covering about six inches at each step, and then retrace and move to the left, covering this time a shorter distance. They nod their heands slightly forward and protrude their knees a little.

**Dance 2.**

The starting position is the same as in the firrt dance. Foot-work is different. They bring their feet slightly forward and then take them back, alternatly.

**Dance 3.**

The starting position is the same as in the first dance. All bend at the waist and sway their hands from the ground to their forehead. making a sort of obeisance. They repeat the action several times.

**Dance 4.**

Women stand one behind the other and slowly move forward waving their hands at the shoulder level, imitating the flight of a bird. The line is very compact. After finishing one round they quicken the movement and take to a very fast rhythm.

**Dance 5.**

The arrangement and the initial movements are the same as in the first dance. After taking about a quarter of a round they turn to the right and imitate the action of plucking flowers and putting them in hair. The action is done with the right hand, the left one being kept on the shoulder of the woman in front.

**Dance 6.**

They clasp hands and stand in an arc formation. They move their right foot across the left, and act as if splashing water.

**Dance 7.**

The starting position is the same as in the first dance. Bending down, they keep their hands on their slightly protruded knees, and slide on both feet once to the right and once to the left.

**Dance 8.**

In this dance the dancers kneel, clap twice in front and twice to the right, the hands moving upwards as if removing rank vegetation. This action is repeated for a number of times while the group moves in a circle.

**Dance 9.**

The starting position is the same as in the first dance. The women move to the left and act as if taking seed from the left hand and sowing it with the right.

**Dance 10.**

This is the famous *karam* dance of the Kol tribes. It is a dance in which both men and women participate.

Women take their usual position. Men stand in an arc behind the women. Both move to the right, taking the right leg to the right first. The men have to take bigger steps as they have to cover greater distance.

**Dance 11.**

In this dance only men participate. They stand one behind the other, keeping their hands on the shoulders of their neighbours in front. The first man, who is usually the leader of the group moves forward keeping his arms open as if groping his way. He makes a hissing sound and takes a zigzag course. It appears from the movement and the sound, that it must be the imitation of a serpant.

**Dance 12.**

The men act as if they are pelting stones at a mango tree, picking up the fallen fruit, removing the skin, eating it up and throwing off the seed.

**The War Dance of Santals.**[1]

It is a wierd picturesque sight. Darkness has fallen, torches have been lit and disposed here and there among the crowd, casting their flickering lights and shadows on the ever-moving figures in the dance that never ceases. The pick of the Santal youth for miles around are dancing the *pāk don.* the sword and shield dance, the uncertain light intensifying the wild effect of their wild movements and gyrations - wearing no clothes but a loin-cloth and rows of jingling bells as anklets, their limbs have full play, showing off their athletic curves and outlines, as they flourish aloft their clubs or shields or spring into the air whirling round at the same time with a savage and unearthly yell. Only the very flower of the Santal youth are chosen to dance the *pāk don*, and in old days it was danced with wild excitement on the eve of battle or with yells of triumph after victory. But it is too energetic a dance to be kept up without constant potations of *hariā* and each of the performers falls out from time to time to take a drink,

1. Bradley-Birt, *Chota Nagpore* (1903), pp. 127-128.

the dance keeping on all through with tireless energy. The *haria*, however, frequently imbibed tells at last, and the sword and the shield dance perforce gives way to the quieter performace of the girls– quieter however, only as regards the steps the ceaseless beating of the tom–toms and the shrill notes of the horns and flutes going on unceasingly.

## 2. The Tharus.

On the southern fringe of Nepal stands the territory known as Thārvaṭ (Tirhut), the homeland of the Tharus. They are a backward people, most of them, now, farm labourers though once they owned the very land they now till for their masters. A sumptuous feast with liberal potations of strong liquor is sufficient to extract anything from them and much of their fertile land, it is said, changed hands for a few feasts of this type. They have Mongolian features and a fair complexion. Except beaf they eat any flesh.

Their women are very hard–working. They do not observe purda and freely mix with men. It is said of the Bihari that if he is permitted to stand he will try to sit and if permitted to sit, he will try to lie down! But the industrious Tharu woman in contrast to the proverbially indolent Bihari, tries to avoid sitting when working. She prefers to be on her legs.

The Tharus have no mixed dances. Women indulge in dancing only on rare occasions and that too, when privacy is assured. The males have no group–dancing. They have trained parties like the *Rādhā* dancers of Ratnagiri district. These parties have keen competition whenever they meet.

In marriage ceremonies the dance is considered indispensable and a well-to-do Tharu would have it performed to celebrate the birth of a child or such other happy event. In Phālgun these parties go from house to house giving their performances, as is done in Maharashtra.

A smart youth with long hair is selected to act as Radha. Another youngster is dressed as Krishna, with the typical head–dress, the dhoti, the shoulder piece and the *shelā* round the waist, and holding a flute in his hands as if playing.

upon it. The Radha has ornaments on her forehead, neck and wrists, and wears a saree with a number of folds which when whirling spread like a lotus. That is the woman's full attire for dancing.

Other prominent figures of the party are the drummer, a player on *mridang* or *tablā* and two others keeping time with a pair of cymbals. If available there are other persons to repeat the chorus. They are also well dressed, wearing a turban and a dhoti.

The dance starts with a *naman*. It is very striking that the start and most of the foot-work--practically all—is like what we witness in the Radha dance in Maharashtra. So are the gestures. The songs refer generally to incidents from the life of Krishna.

The dancing, singing and the accompaniment music being in harmony, it is no wonder that the audience is keenly interested. Women-folk occupy the front, the men sitting behind. It is only through the medium of this agency perhaps that the illiterate Tharu knows something about his religion.

### 3. The *Kathi* dance of the Bauris.

The *kāthī* dance and song is practised in Birbhum by the so-called depressed sections of the Hindu society and mainly by the Bauris.

An even number of men—usually adults—dance to the accompaniment of the *mādal*. They stand in a circle each carrying two short sticks—one in the either hand. The man who plays on the *mādal* remains outside the ring and sometimes at its centre. At the commencement the dancers sing in chorus and each keep on hitting the left hand stick with the right hand one at regular intervals and in perfect time. Then, as the dance begins each alternate dancer forms a pair with his right hand neighbour and strikes with his left hand stick the right hand stick of his partner on his right. Each man then strikes his left hand stick with the right hand one. Different pairs are then formed-those who formed pairs with their right hand neighbours now form pairs with the left hand neighbours

and strike the left hand sticks of their partners with their right hand one. The process is repeated and all the while the dancers keep moving along the ring in anti-clockwise direction. The whole system is in accordance with a simple but regular and symmetrical scheme ; the steps are brisk and graceful and the body-movements are very lively and in entire unison with the sound of the sticks which produce a pleasing rhythmic effect. The scheme includes many variations of which the most interesting is that in which a player falls flat on the ground on his back as if wounded and yet keeps on dancing round and round in that position, striking his sticks against those of his neighbours, who keep up the round progression of the ring.

In its origin it was very likely a war-dance and the sticks are symbolised swords and shields. The fashion in which the shields are wielded indicates parrying with swords.

The name is obviously derived from the fact that the dancing is performed with *kāṭhis* (sticks) in hand.

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1. G. S. Dutta, I.C.S., *Census Report of Bengal*, 1931.

# APPENDIX B

## Dance-songs in *Devanagari* Script.

### दिंडी.

१. ज्ञानोबा तुकाराम । ज्ञानदेव तुकाराम ।।

### टिपरी व गोफ.

२. एक टिपरी घे दुसरीस मार गे । तिसरी देऊनि चौथी फिरव गे ।
पांचवी देऊन सहावी मार गे । सातवी बदल ।।
हरीसि खेळतां आनंद चित्ता हरिगुण गातां अगणित रे ।
खेळावया धरणी न पुरे । आशि हरि माया ।।
ऐकतांचि कानीं मधुर मधुर ध्वनि वादन करि हरि प्रेमभरें ।
भुलल्या गोपी गोप सारे । आशि हरि माया ।।

३. पहा पहा लागला झगडा हो । पहा पहा लागला झगडा ।।
त्याचा हिरोनी घेतला आम्हीं पगडा हो ।
पहा पहा लागला हो झगडा ।।

४. झगड्याचि टिपरी मारा गोपींनो माझ्यासंगें ।
भिऊन सरूं नका मागें मागें ।।
पुरतें शहाणपण यांना नाहीं । टिपरी आले माराया ।।
शिकविणार तो बहु अज्ञानी । कोण येतो ताराया ।।

### गोविंदा.

५. कृष्ण आला रे आला । गोकुळांत आनंद झाला ।।
कृष्णासाठीं रे साठीं । गोकुळांत साखर वाटीं ।।

६. × × गल्लीचा आला रे गोविंदा । संभाळ रे दुष्माना ।।

७. गोविंदा गोपाळा । दहिं दे गोपाळा । दूध दे गोपाळा ।
गोविंदा गोपाळा ॥

८. बांबूला बांबू चिकटवला । दादा लोकांना फटकवला ॥
चायवाल्याची चाय गरम । दादा लोकांची हड्डी नरम ॥

९. हिच्या घरांत नाहीं पाणी । घागर उताणी गो रंगमहालीं ॥

## गौरीचा नाच.

१०. नदीच्या तीरीं काळी मोरी गाय । तिच्या निऱ्याखालीं पर्वतराई ॥
तिथें पार्वती आली न्हायाला । तिच्या अंगाचा मळ काढला ॥
त्याही मळाचा गण बनविला । गण चालला शिवपूजेला ॥
गणाचा घोडा उंदीर झाला । गण तो घोड्यावर बैसला ॥
त्यानें घोड्याला चाबूक मारीला । तेव्हां घोड्याचा पाय सरला ॥
त्यानें तो गण खालीं पडला । चांद तयाला हसूं लागला ॥
तेव्हां गणाला क्रोध चढला । त्यानें चंद्राला शाप हो दिला ॥
चतुर्थी रात्रीं पाहाती तूला । चोरीचा आळ येईल त्याला ॥

११. पिकला डाळिंब लिंबू ग । भ्याट बंधुला धाडी ग ॥
हौशा माझा बंधू ग । मला जोडवी घडवी ग ॥
बसला यमुना तीरीं ग । वरती नक्षी काढी ग ॥

१२. टोपीवाल्याचा मुलुख दांडगा । त्यांत शिरला जर्मन लांडगा ॥

१३. मार्गीं हळू हळू चाला । मुखानें जय हिन्द बोला ।
मुखानें जय हिन्द बोला । भारता स्वराज्य मिळवाया ॥

## ढोलाचा नाच ( मल्हार कोळी ).

१४. पहिला नमीन सर्थचंद्राला । दुसरा नमीन धरतीमातेला ।
तिसरा नमीन हो ढोल्या बालाला । चवथा नमीन नाच्या बालाला ।
पहिली हांक दिली नाच्या बालाला ।
दुसरी हाक दिली ढोल्या बालाला ।

आजच्या दिसाला नाचाचा गजर झालाये ।
जाय शेताच्या खोरा ये । कामडिनी गाणं बोलाये ।
कोणीं रे गाणं बोलाये । पहिली हांक दिली दादा ।
गुरांनीं साथ केली दादा ॥

१५. उंच बंगल्याचा धका ग । आइ, उंच बंगल्याचा धका ग ।
आइ, तिथें मी खेळत होतें ग । आइ, बंगल्यांत खेळत होतें ग ।
आइ, गाईचा गोवारी होता ग । आइ, गाईचा गोवारी होता ।
आइ, तोच माझा भावला ग । आइ, तोच माझा नवरा ग ।

१६. धरमतरीवर ठेवला पाय ग । सासऱ्याच्या पाठीं नाय कुणी जाय ग ।
नवऱ्याच्या पाठीं हंसतच जाय ग । सासूच्या पाठीं नाय कुणी जाय ग ॥

१७. आंब्याची पालवी चटकुर रे । खेळे दादाची लटकुर रे ॥
कांबडणेबाइची लटकुर रे ॥

१८. आगिनगाडीचा कोलसा कोलसा । सूर्या नदीचा वलसा वलसा ॥
आगिनगाडीचा कोलसा कोलसा । काळू नदीचा वलसा वलसा ॥

१९. उरले गावीं गिनत गुण काय ग । न कामड्याबगर शोभत नाय ग ।
न कांबडनीबगर शोभत नाय ग । न खेल्याबगर शोभत नाय ग ।
न गानारनीबगर शोभत नाय ग ॥

२०. जंगली शिपाइ मेला । मेला न बरा झाला ।
जंगलाची सुटी झाली । जंगली रिंजन मेला ।
मेला न बरा झाला । जंगलाची सुटी झाली ॥

२१. आगांत बागांत एकलि कशि राहूं ? । फुगड्या कशि घालूं ? ॥

२२. इह सभा कुणाची ग कुणाची ? । इह सभा झोटिंग देवाची ॥

२३. आतां नाचूं कुठें रे नाचूं कुठें ? । धरतीचे पाठीवरी रे ॥

**झेंडा नाच.**

२४. लग्न जाहली कन्या राजाची । कन्या राजाची तिला भोगिली ।
तिला भोगिली हजारजणांनीं । हजारजण हो भोगून गेले ।
हजारजण हो भोगून गेले । भोगून गेलें नी स्वर्गा हो गेले ।
नित्य भोगिती हजार तिला । परी कुमारी आहे ती बाळा ।
कोण असे ही कन्या हो बोला । प्रश्न हा माझा आहे तुम्हांला ॥

उत्तर:- कन्या कोण ही देतों सांगून । पहा आहे ती शेतजमीन ॥

२५. देशावरून जोगीन आली । देशावरून जोगीन आली ।
एका दिवशीं तिला भोगिली । शंभर वेळां तिला भोगिली ।
तरी कुमारी खरी राहिली । तरी कुमारी खरी राहिली ।
कोण असावी अशी ती बाला । प्रश्न पुसतों दादा मी तुला ॥

उत्तर:—त्याचें उत्तर देणें तुम्हाला । तंबाकू बाई ठावी आम्हांला ॥

**ढोलाचा नाच** ( कातकरी ).

२६. गायत्री मंत्र कां हो तुम्ही जपतां ।
दोष जाती भंगाला तुम्ही पावित्र्य पावतां ॥
सावित्रीच्या गायत्रीला म्हणतां तुम्ही माता ।
गायत्री मेल्यावर दिवस मास कुठें घालतां ॥
कां म्हाराच्या हवालीं करतां एवढी मोठी माता ।
म्हार तुम्हांला पुण्य लागतो दूर कां हो धरतां ॥

**ढोलाचा नाच** ( ठाकूर ).

२७. अजि मां धंतरीवरी अजि मां पायु दिलाये ।
अजि मां नाचू केलाये । येडा का वाकुडा ये ।
देवानीं मान्या केलाये ॥

२८. प्रथम गण गिनान काय गाऊं रे । बापशिवाय जनम नाहीं रे ।
आईशिवाय माया नाहीं रे । भावाशिवाय बाजू नाहीं रे ।

बहिणीशिवाय सोयरा नाहीं रे । बैलाबगर शेती नाहीं रे ॥

२९. ढोलाच्या दळामधें रे । काय दणाणला रे ॥
सुपारी बांगडी रे । खेळती एके जागीं रे ॥

३०. दादा कचीतुं कचितुं दादा शेल्यानं कंबर ।
दादा फेऱ्याच्या फेऱ्याला दादा सोडीतों रे बांधितों ॥

३१. काळी कपिली गाय । कुणीं हो केलीये ।
शेणासाठीं देवानें केलीये ॥

३२. दादा ढोल वाजे कूबुक । दादा नाचाचा झूबुक ॥

३३. मेहुणीच्या जोबनीं रे । काय रे दिसू लालू रे ॥
रेशीमाची चोळी रे । दादा जोबनिं दिसे लालु रे ॥
दादा मेहुणी ढमाल । दादा गळ्याला रुमाल ॥
दादा मेहुणी ढवळी । दादा जोबनीं कोंवळी ॥

**शिमगा** ( राधा ).

३४. रामानें आज्ञा केलि लक्ष्मणासी । सिता न्यावी वनवासासी री.... ।
रथाचा थाट केला मध्यानरात्रींसी ।
श्यामकर्ण जोडिले त्यासी री.... ।
सारथी लक्ष्मणहरी । अहो हरी री.... ।
वन लागलें दारूण । अहो दारूण री.... ।
रथ चाले वनाभीतरीं । रथ चाले वनाभीतरीं री.... ।
सिता निजली ती जागी झालि लक्ष्मण नाहीं ।
हा गेला कोठें बाई री.... ।
नउ महिने गर्भ कुशी सिता वनवासी ।
आली तातोबाच्या गुंफेसी री.... ।
तातोबा पुसे तिथेस न सीते बाई । तूं जासी कवणे ठाईं री.... ।
कोणाची तूं कोण जासी काठें । कुठें गर्भ राहिला वाटे री.... ।
रामाची मी जानकी न पतिव्रता । तुज दाविन सत्व आतां री.... ।
नउ महिने संपुर्ण झाले प्रसूत येळे । पोटीं लव अंकुश जन्मले री... ॥

३५. आपुल्या आंगणीं सारवण घालीतें बाई ।
आपुल्या आंगणीं कणा घालीतें बाई ।
आपुल्या आंगणीं मोत्या झेलीतें बाई ।
आपुल्या आंगणीं गजरा गुंफितें बाई ॥

३६. सइ सइ माझ्या आंगणीं ग । चाफा मोगरा दोन्ही ।
पाणी घालुनि वाढविला । वेल मांडवा गेला ।
मोत्यें लागलीं त्याला । त्याचा गजरा गुंफीला ।
गजरा महामाईला वाहिला ॥

३७. श्रीरामाची आज्ञा घेऊन उठले अंगद हरी हो उठले अंगद ।
अयागेमने तिथें चालले लंकेच्या सुधी री.... ।
दुरुनि पाहिली लंका कपिला बहु चढला क्रोध
हरी हो बहु चढला क्रोध ।
रत्नखचित कळा सभोवता सागर आहे रुंद री.... ।
उतरले कीं लंकेमधीं । सर्व देव पाहिले बंदी ।
मदालत बसली आहे समदी । आसन करोनि पुच्छाचें ।
लोकविषय रूप येती पहायाला अंगदाचें री.... ।
आलांत कोठुनि जातां कोठें काय नांव तुमचें
हरी हो काय नांव तुमचें ।
आलों सीतेच्या सुधी नगर पायला रावणाचें री.... ।
निरोप आइक दशशिरा । सोड पतिव्रता सुंदरिला ।
नाहीं तर जाशील यमपुरीला । नाहीं तर प्राणासि मुकशील ।
सोड जाउं दे सिता नि अंगद बोले रावणासी री....॥
रावणाचे सभे अंगद गेले शिष्टाइसी हरी हो गेले शिष्टाइसी ।
सोड जाऊं दे सिता० ॥
रावण बोलला अंगद आईक मर्कटा हरी हो आईक मर्कटा ।
पीता तुझा वालि मारिला रामानें उलटा री.... ।
त्याची चाकरि करिशी आणखी काय पडला तोटा ।
जाउनशानी उसने घेशिल मायेच्या पुता री .... ।
धन्य धन्य व्यर्थ तव जीणें । तोंड दाविशि लाजिरवाणें ।

येउनि क्षत्रियांच्या वंशीं, येउनि क्षत्रियांच्या वंशीं ।
सोड जाउं दे सिता० ॥
खूप क्रोध कपिला आला अंगद उखळला भारी ।
जाउनि त्यानीं लाथ मारिली रावणाचे ऊरीं री.... ।
पाडला तया धरणिला तेव्हां जागी झाली लंका सारी ।
एक चक्कर वर्षला उडाले सभामंडपद्वारीं री.... ।
उडाले सभामंडप घेऊन । असे श्रीरामाचे प्रताप ।
येथुनि कथा होइल ऊमाप । सिंदुर नांदत कणदेशीं ।
सोड जाऊं दे सिता० ॥

**शिमगा** ( नकटा ).

३८. उंबराखालीं खतला डुऱ्या हो ।
गुरूच्या सत्वानें लागला झरा हो ।
उठा उठा पंतोजी आंघोळी करा हो ।
आंघोळि करतांना देखला मासा हो ।
जानवं तोडून टाकला फांसा हो ।
त्यांत गुतलाय मल्या मासा हो ।
हातांत फांसा डोइवर मासा हो ।
फेंगडा बामन चालतो कसा हो ।
दे गो बामणी मिऱ्याचा पसा हो ।
त्याचा रस्सा गोड झालाय कसा हो ।
कांडुन कुटून कोळणीच्या हवालीं-कोळणीनं केलन आंबट फट्

३९. पाषाण फोडतां चिरे कमावतां हो ।
परशरामाच्या देवळासी हो ।
चिरे काढिले कुंभारांनीं हो ।
चिरे काढिले बारा का यांगला हो ॥

४०. बिरामणाच्या आंगणीं चाफ्याच्या लावणी हो ।
चाफे लाविले हारोंहारीं हो । फुलें फुललीं परोपरीं हो ।

त्या फुलांचा सुवास भारी हो। या बाईचा आंगणां चांगलां हों।
या बाईकडे देव आले पाव्हणे हो ॥
४१. उगवले सूर्य फांकलीं किरणं हो।
सूर्याच्या किरणां चरती हरणां हो।
हरणां चरती दोघां कां जणां हो ॥

**कोळ्याचा नाच.**

४२. आयानु बायानु जातें मुलखाला। सासऱ्याच्या गांवाला निघोनि गो।
माझ्या सासरसुन कागद ऐलाय। धन्यानं माझ्यायला बोलाविली गो ॥
४३. आगिनगाडी सोसावली माझी मोटार गे।
उभी करा माझी मोटार गे उभी करा।
मास्तरदादा, मास्तरदादा, मला तिकिटाची।
जल्दी करा मला तिकिटाची जल्दी करा।
जल्दी करा जल्दी करा माझ्या संगतीचा।
मित्र गेला माझ्या संगतीचा मित्र गेला।
मित्र गेला मित्र गेला मला कल्याणची।
तारीख नेमा मला कल्याणची तारीख नेमा।
कल्याणची तारीख नेमा मला ठाण्याचा।
वकील करा मला ठाण्याचा वकील करा।
ठाण्याचा वकील करा माझ्या कजियाचा।
निकाल करा माझ्या कजियाचा निकाल करा ॥

**मंगळागौर** ( फुगडी ).

४४. चिरे बाइ चिरे विहिरीचे चिरे। तुझी माझी फुगडी गरगर फिरे ॥
४५. सहाण बाई सहाण कुरुंदी सहाण।
मी असलें लहान तरी तुला टाकीन गहाण ॥
४६. माती बाई माती परातभर माती।
उभ्या भिंती सारवूं आपण × × च्या नाती ॥

४७. पळ्या बाइ पळ्या संध्येच्या पळ्या ।
आपण दोघी फुगडी घालूं गुलाबाच्या कळ्या ॥

४८. शेलदारि साडीचा भरजरी पदर ।
× × फुगडी घाली तिथें × × ची नजर ॥

४९. आपण दोघी मैत्रिणी एकमत करूं ।
स्वदेशी बांगड्या हातांत भरूं ॥

५०. हारा बाई हारा फुलांचा हारा ।
× × ची मुलगी ताकाचा डेरा ॥

५१. उसळ बाई उसळ दाण्याची उसळ ।
मी असलें डेरा तर तूं ताक घुसळ ॥

५२. गोणी बाई गोणी तांदळाची गोणी ।
मीं केलें ताक तर तूं काढ लोणी ॥

५३. सूप बाई सूप पाखडायचं सूप ।
मी काढतें लोणी तर तूं कर तूप ॥

५४. गडू बाई गडू चांदीचा गडू ।
मीं केलें तूप तर तूं कर लाडू ॥

**मंगळागौर** ( नाच गो घुमा ).

५५. नाच गो घुमा । नाचूं मी कशी ।
आलेगांवचा । पालेगांवचा । माळी[1] नाहीं आला ।
वेणी नाहीं मला । नाचूं मी कशी ॥

**मंगळागौर** ( काथोटकाना ).

५६. काथोटकाना । तेल्याचा घाणा । तेली गेला तिळाला ।
तेलांत पडलं पाखरूं । तेंच + + + चं लेकरूं ॥

1 माळी व वेणी यांऐवजीं शिंपी–चोळी, साळी–साडी, सोनार–वाकी, इत्यादि घालून गाणें चालू राहातें.

**मंगळागौर** ( झिम्मा ).

५७. सरसर गोविंदा येतो मजवरि गुलाल फेकीतो ।
त्याच्या गुलालानें फार माझी वेणी झाली लाल ।
घड गे घड गे सोनारा माणिक मोत्याचा डोलदारा ॥

५८. अग अग सुने, काय म्हणतां सासूबाई ।
पाटल्यांचा जोड तूं काय ग केलास काय ग केलास ।
दिराचं लगीन झालं त्याला हो दिला त्याला हो दिला ॥

**दसरा** ( कातकरी स्त्रिया ).

५९. राजा बोले प्रधानाला ।
बोलवा फांसेपारध्याला ।
फांस त्यांनीं टाकला वनांत ।
हरण चकत सुटीला ।
जाउन पडला फांसांत । बोलवा मलारी बालाला ।
हरणाची किंमत काय बोला । हरणाचे साठ रुपये ग ।
तीन ताशाची जमीन घ्यावी ॥

६०. सारविला ओटी अंगणा । ठेविल्या तांब्याच्या दूडी ।
फोडीले पांच नारील । काढीलें खोरीभर दूध ।
करीला खीरभोजन । शिवील्या पांच पत्रावल्या ।
वाढीला खीरभोजन । बोलवा फांसेपारधी ।
जेवीले फांसेपारधी ॥

**दिवाळी** ( ठाकुर स्त्रिया ).

६१. चिखल्या पायीं ढोपरावरी जी जी ।
त्या सांडल्या पायाच्या माझ्या वाकी जी जी ।
छंद लागला पायाच्या वाकीचा जी जी ॥

६२. दून्या रानांत चल जाउं रे । दुन्या सागली वासे तोडूं रे ।
दुन्या भराडी घर बांधुं रे । दुन्या कौलारी माडी बांधुं रे ।

दुन्या इटेच्या भिंति बांधुं रे । दुन्या सोन्याचा कलस लाऊं रे ।
दुन्या दुरून दिसे लालु रे । दुन्या गल्यांतले गलसरे तोडुं रे ।
दुन्या धन्याच्या हातीं देउं रे । दुन्या फिटली तुझी चाकरी रे ।
दुन्या चालला वैतागाला । नको जाऊं वैतागाला ॥

६३. चल चल माझ्या अंबो भरतारा । पदरीं घाली तुझ्या वारा रे ।
कंकणीं हात घाली उशाखालीं । निद्रा लागुन गेलीये ।
अंगाला अंग नको लाऊं रे । येलिया जोड मोडली रे ।
मोडल्या तोडल्या घेऊं संगतीं । जाऊं आपण सोनारआळीला ॥

**दिवाळी** ( आगरी स्त्रिया ).

६४. माल्याच्या पोरीनीं केर ग काढीला। केर काढुन तिनें सुपा भरीला।
गवलावरी लिंबन फुटली । लिंबन बाय बागेंत झाली ।
लिंबन बाय एक पान झाली । लिंबन बाय दोन पानं झाली ।
लिंबन बाय तीन पानं झाली । लिंबनीला बोका फुटला ।
लिंबन बाय इस्तारूं गेली । लिंबानिस कलस आले ।
लिंबन बाय फुलूं लागली । लिंबिनीवरी लिंबा हो आलीं ।
लिंबा हो उजळूं लागली । माली तो मळ्यांतु गेला ।
माल्यानीं निसणी लाविल्या । माली बा वरती चढला ।
माल्यानीं लिंबा खुडली । मालनीनीं पाट्या भरील्या ।
वर टाकल्या शेल्या दुरटी । माली बा खालीं उतरला ।
मालनीच्या डोईं वलाविल्या । तिथून मालिन झटकली ।
राईचे गांवाला गेली । लिंबवा घ्या साद हो घातली ।
राइबाइ धावतु आली । पैशाची लिंबवा हो किती ।
हिरवीं आहेत दोन । पिवळीं आहेत तीन ।
ही बाइ मालीन कोणाचे गांवची । राइबाइ तुझ्या सासुऱ्याची ।
माझ्या ग सासरची । मानसां कशि हाइत ।
सर्वाइ हाइत सुखी । राइ तुझा भरतार दुखी ।
तिथून राइ झटकली । आईचे जवळी गेली ।

अग तूं आई माझे वंशीं । मला ग सासुऱ्या पोचाविशी ।
भरुं दे मथुरेचा हाट । देइन तुला सोलांबरी सूप ।
मग बाइ तुला सासुऱ्या पोचाविन । तिथून राइ निघाली ।
बापाचे जवळी गेली । बापानें आज्ञा हो दिली ।
राइबाइ खोबरा लाऊं गेली । हातीची वाटी धरणीं पडली ।
आयगो आय मला अजगुन घडला ।
आपले घरीं जाया कशाचा अजगुन ।
राइबाइ आंग धुऊं गेली । हातचा तांब्या धरणीं पडला ।
राइबाइ जेवाया बसली । हातचा घांस धरणीं पडला ।
राइबाइ डोकें उकलूं बसली । हातची फणी धरणीं पडली ।
राइबाइ फुलें भरूं लागली । हातचें फुल धरणीं पडलां ।
राइबाइ घड्या घालूं लागली । हातच्या घड्या खालीं पडल्या ।
राइबाइ चालती झाली । आपल्या गांवाला गेली ।
आपले घरांत आली । हातीच्या घड्या दांडी ठेविल्या ।
सासूच्या पायां वोनवली । उठ उठ ग तूं राई ।
इथं गो काय तुझा काजू । माहेरीं करावा राजू ।
सोना तो उलगुन गेला । लाखेचा भरवन ऱ्हालां ।
भरली सात ताटां । मांडिले सातये पाटु ।
भरीले सातये तांब्ये । सा ताटावर साजण बसले ।
सातवा ऐदिस कुठें वो गेला । सातवा बड्याशीं गेला ।
राइबाइ वाड्याशीं गेली । तिथें बा नाईं भरतारू ।
गाईला वाचा फुटली । राइ तुझा भरतार सर्गिं पावला ।
अर तूं सर्गिंच्या देवा । तुजा रे मिनीं काय केला ।
हळदीचा डाग नाइ गेला । कपाळीं गंधाचा टिळा ।
या वाटें भरतारू गेला । कपाळें हरचंद ल्याला ।
अशा धा रांडबाया येती । भरतार वळवुन नेती ।
भरली देवांची सभा । देवाच्या पायां पडली ।
भरतार घेऊन आली । राइबाइ वाड्यासि आली ।
गाईचे पायां पडली । राइबाइ घरासि आली ।

सासूचे पाया वोनवली । उठ ग उठ तूं राई ।
जन्म ग सावित्री होशी । अमर चूडा ग लेशी ॥

६५. साखरगोटे राईवाले गो । राईवाले सये राईवाले ।
माहेरीं येती हौलुबाई हो । हौलुबाई सये हौलुबाई ।
त्यांचीं शेतें डोंगरिं गो । डोंगरीं सये डोंगरीं ।
डोंगर जलती धडधडा गो । धडधडा सये धडधडा ।
हरणां रडती खळखळा गो । खळखळा सये खळखळा ।
हरणोलीचा दुधूला गो । दूधूला सये दूधूला ।
त्या दूधूला बालाला । बालाला सये बालाला ।
बाला पाठीच्या नकशित्रा । नकाशित्रा हरी नकशित्रा ।
सूर्या तुझा रे बोलवना । बोलवना हरी बोलवना ।
चांदा तुझा खेलवना रे । खेलवना हरी खेलवना ॥

६६. आंब्याचा ठसूर टाला गो गडे पाला गो ।
कोण माहेरा येई गो गडे येई गो ।
देई दैवाची हौलुबाई हो गडे हौलुबाई गो ।
तिला कोण पाहिजे गो गडे पाहिजे गो ।
तिच्या पाठीचा बंधू गो गडे बंधू गो ।
बंधू बसला जांभे घोडे गो गडे घोडे गो ।
त्यासी बंधू दिसे गो गडे दिसे गो ।
हातीचा विडा देउन भाइ वळखा रे भाइ वळखा रे ॥

# APPENDIX C

## NOTATION

The notation is given according to the Indian system of music. According to this system each *saptaka* consists of seven principal notes and five half-notes. The former are known as *shuddha* and the latter, as *komal*. In a harmonium of three *saptakas* there are 36 keys for 36 notes of the three *saptakas*. The first one is known as *Mandra* (of low pitch), the second one is known as *Madhya* (the middle) and the last one is known as *Tāra*(high). The notes in the ascending order of the scales are s, r, g, m, p, d, n.

The notes from the *Mandra saptaka* are dotted on the head.

Each dash indicates an additional beat for the preceding note.

**दिंडी.** ताल– केरवा.

| | |
|---|---|
| ज्ञा नो बा ऽ | तुका ऽ रा म |
| रे रे सा – | धंधं – धं सा |

**गोविंदा.** ताल– केरवा.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| गो विं दा ऽ | आ ऽ ला ऽ | रे ऽ ऽ ऽ | आ ऽ ऽ ऽ |
| धं सा सा – | रे – ग – | म – – – | ग म ग रे |
| ला ऽ गो ऽ | कु ळां ऽ त | आ ऽ नं द | झा ऽ ला ऽ |
| सा – सा निं | धं निं – निं | सा – रे रे | सा – सा – |

**गौरीचा नाच.** ताल— केरवा.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| पां ड ऽ व | गे ऽ ले ऽ | व न शि का | रि ला ऽ हो |
| म म — म | म — म — | ग ग ग ग | रे रे रे — |
| पां ड ऽ व | गे ऽ ले ऽ | व न शि का | रि ला ऽ ऽ |
| सा सा— रे | ग — रे — | सा सा रे सा | सा — सा — |

**दिवाळी नाच.** ताल— केरवा.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| दा ऽ दा ऽ | बां ऽ धी ऽ | तों ऽ बां ऽ | धि तों ऽ ऽ |
| धं — सा — | रे — ग — | ग — म — | ग रे — — |
| दा ऽ दा ऽ | शे ऽ ल्या ऽ | नीं ऽ कं ऽ | ब र ऽ ऽ |
| रे — सा नि | सा — रे — | ग रे सा निं | सा सा — — |

**कोळ्याचा नाच.** ताल— दादरा.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (१) | डों गर फो | डुन बोल ते | र स्ता के | ला गो मु |
| | धं धं धं | सा सा सा | धं सा रे | ग रे ग |
| | हाच का य | गो ऽ ऽ | र स्ता के | ला गो मु |
| | सारे ग रे | सा — — | धं सा रे | ग रे ग |
| | हाच का य | गो ऽ ऽ | र स्ता के | ला ऽ ऽ |
| | सारे ग रे | सा — — | रे रे रे | सा — — |
| (२) | आ या नु | बा या नु | जा तें मुल् | खा ऽ ला |
| | धं धं सा | सा सा रे | रेग ग रे | गम ग रे |
| | सा सर च्या | गां वा ला | नि घो नि | गो ऽ ऽ |
| | सा सा सा | रे ग रे | सा सा सा | धं — — |

**राधा नाच.** ताल— केरवा.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (१) | आ ऽ पु ल्या | आं ऽ ग णीं | सार व ऽ ण | घाली तें बा ई |
| | ग रे ग रे | ग म ग रे | निं सा — निं सा | रे रे सा |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (२) | श्री ऽ रा ऽ | मा ऽ ची ऽ | आ ऽ ज्ञा ऽ | घे ऽ उ न |
| | धं – धं – | सा – रे – | ग – ग रे | – रे ग – |
| | सु ट ले ऽ | अ ऽ गं ऽ | द ऽ ऽ ह | री ऽ हो ऽ |
| | सासासा – | सा – रे – | ग – – ग | रे – ग – |
| | सु ट ले ऽ | अ ऽ गं ऽ | द ऽ ऽ ऽ | ऽ ऽ ऽ ऽ |
| | सासासा – | सा – रे – | ग – – – | रे – – – |
| | अ याऽ गे | ऽ म ने ऽ | तिथें ऽ चा | ऽ ल ले ऽ |
| | ग ग – ग | – म ग – | रे रे – सा | – रे ग – |
| | लं ऽ के ऽ | च्याऽ सु ऽ | धी ऽ ऽ ऽ | री ऽ ऽ ऽ |
| | रे – ग – | रे – सा – | रे – – – | सा – – – |

**नकटा नाच.** ताल– केरवा.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| उं ब रा ऽ | खा ऽ लीं ऽ | ख त ला ऽ | डु न्या ऽ रे |
| धं धं धं सा | सा – रे – | ग ग रे – | सा सा – रे |
| ख त ला ऽ | डु ऽ न्या ऽ | | |
| ग ग – रे | सा – सा – | | |

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## GLOSSARY

*Āgoṭā phāgoṭā*— The name of a dance.

*Āgrī*— An agriculturist caste from Thana and Kolaba districts.

*Ākhāḍā*— A group of persons who give demonstrations of physical feats and accompany marriage processions with *lezim* for which they are paid. A wrestling pit. A gymnasium.

*Ākhāḍī*— Another name for *Dashāvatār* current in Ahmednagar district.

*Akshayyatritīyā*— The 3rd day of Vaishākh.

*Ambāḍī*— A plant of the hemp-type, green leaves of which are used as vegetable.

*Ananta-chaturdashī*— The 14th day of Bhādrapad.

*Annapūrṇā*— The name of a goddess.

*Āpṭā*— A tree, leaves of which are supposed to symbolize gold and exchanged as greetings on the *Dasarā* day.

*Āratī*— A lighted wick waved before an idol in a ceremonial way.

*Āṣhāḍhī ekādashī*— The eleventh day of Āṣhāḍh.

*Atyāpātyā*— A Maharashtrian outdoor game.

*Avatār*— An incarnation.

*Baiṭhak*— A panchayat meeting.

*Balipratipadā*— The first day of Kārtik.

*Balutedār* — The holder of the *balutā* title, a hereditary monopoly entitling a craftsman to certain traditionally fixed remuneration in return for his services.

*Bhagat*— One expert in the esoteric art; the medicine-man.

*Bhāgwat*— A literary work in praise of God Vishnu.

*Bhajan*—Singing of songs in praise of God usually by a group.

*Bhakti*— Devotion.

*Bhāng tiḷā nāch*— The name of a dance.

*Bhāt bhālaṇyāchā nāch*— The name of a dance.

*Bhāūbīj*— The second day of Kārtik.

*Bhikṣhuk*— A Brahmin priest.

*Bhilkavḍā*— The name of a dance.

*Bhil*— One of the hill-tribes of Maharashtra.

*Boḍaṇ*— A rite performed by some Chitpavan families after a birth, initiation or a marriage takes place in the family.

*Bohāḍā*— Another name for *Dashāvatār* used in Nasik district.

*Bhutāḷī*— A witch.

*Chāmbhār*— A shoemaker.

*Chāturmās*— The period from the 10th day of Āshāḍh to the 12th day of Kārtik, during which god Vishnu is believed to be asleep.

*Cheulī nāch*— The name of a dance.

*Chilīm*— Clay pipe for smoking.

*Chitpāvan*— A Brahmin sect.

*Ḍaph*— A musical instrument.

*Ḍaggā*— A musical instrument.

*Dahihanḍī*— A pot full of curds, etc. used at the time of *Gokuḷ-kālā*

*Dahikālā*— Another name of *Dashāvatar* on Malvan side. The dance and the breaking of the *hanḍī* on the *Gokuḷ-āshṭamī* day.

*Dasarā*— The tenth day of Āshvin.

*Dashāhār*— The first ten days of Jyeshṭha.

*Dashāntrī*— The performers of *Dashāvatār*.

*Dashāvatār*—The folk-ballet of Maharashtra in which themes based on the exploits of the ten incarnations of Vishnu are danced.

*Dāvaṇ*— The name of a dance.

*Ḍerā*— A big earthen pot. The name of a dance.

*Deshastha*— A Brahmin sect.

*Deshmukh*— One of the title-holders of the Maratha kingdom.

*Dev*— Another name for *tarang*.

*Dhanatrayodashī*— The 13th day of the dark half of Āshvin.

*Dhenḍe nāchavaṇe*— Dancing the bride and the bridegroom after the marriage procession.

*Ḍhol*— A big drum.

*Ḍholkī*— A small drum.

*Dhūlivandan or Dhuḷvaḍ*— The day after *Hoḷī*.

*Dinḍī*— A processional dance of the *vārkarīs*.

*Divāḷī*— A very important festival of the Hindus starting from *Dhanatrayodashī* and ending with *Bhāūbīj*.
*Durvā*— A kind of grass, which is sacred to the Hindus.
*Ekādashī*— The eleventh dav of the bright and the dark fort-nights of a month.
*Gaṇesh chaturthī*— The fourth day of Bhādrapad, the day of Ganapati festival.
*Ganjiphā*— A pack of circular, smooth playing cards, 120 in number, 12 cards being assigned to each of the ten incarnations of Vishnu.
*Gokuḷ*— The place round about Mathura where Krishna spent his childhood.
*Gokuḷāshtamī*— The eighth day of the dark half of Shrāvaṇ, the birthday of Krishna.
*Gomū*— The 'fisherwoman' in *Koḷyāchā nāch*.
*Goph*— The name of a dance.
*Gondhaḷ*— The dance performed by *Gondhaḷīs*— hereditary professional performers of *Gondhaḷ*.
*Gourīpūjan*— The day on which goddess Gouri is worshipped.
*Gourīvisarjan*— The day on which the image of goddess Gouri is immersed,
*Gouryāvāhan*— The day on which the image of goddess Gouri is brought.
*Guḍhī*— The flag hoisted on the Hindu new year's day i. e., the first day of Chaitra (*Guḍhī pādavā*).
*Haḷadī*— Turmeric.
*Haḷadī-kunkū*— Another name for Chaitra Gouri festival.
*Hanḍā*— The co-operative system of the Agris of doing farm-work. A big pot.
*Hanḍī*— An earthen pot.
*Haritālikā*— The day of worshipping Sati & Parvati.
*Hoḷī*— The fifteenth day of Phālgun on which bonfires are lighted.
*Houlubāī*— The presiding deity of the *Hoḷī* festival of the Agris.
*Huraṇāchā nāch*— The name of a dance.
*Ināmdār*— Persons holding *inām* lands, which are free from government taxes,

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*Jahāgirdār*— A landlord from a noble family.

*Jākhaḍī*— Another name for the Gour dance of the Kunbi; the songs sung on the occasion,

*Joḍvī*— A silver ring for the big toe.

*Jowār*— A kind of corn.

*Kālā*— Another name for *Dashāvatār* on Malavan side. The name of a dance.

*Kāmḍyā*— The name of a dance.

*Kātkarī*— One of the hill-tribes of North Konkan.

*Kāṭkheḷ*— The name of a dance.

*Khair*— The tree from which catechu is extracted.

*Khālū*— A group of musicians.

*Kheḷe*— A name for *Dashāvātar* performers near-about Sangameshvar.

*Kirīṭ*— A crown.

*Kīrtan*— A religious discourse interspersed with songs and music.

*Kīrtankār*— One who performs *kīrtans*.

*Kolhāṭīṇ*— A woman belonging to one of the professional dancing classes of Maharashtra.

*Koḷī*— A fisherman.

*Koḷīṇ*— A fisherwoman.

*Kombḍā*— A cock. A dance named after the bird.

*Konkaṇastha*— Another name for the Chitpāvan.

*Kṣhetra*— A holy place.

*Kuḷkarṇī*— One of the *balutedārs*.

*Kumbhār*— A potter.

*Lamāṇ*— A backward tribe in Sholapur District.

*Langoṭ*— The tight small clothing for the buttocks and the genital organs used by males specially at the time of wrestling.

*Laxmīpūjan*— The last day of Āshwin on which Laxmi, the goddess of wealth is worshipped.

*Lezim*— The apparatus used in the *lezim* dance.

*Maḍhī*— The hut of a *bhagat* specially built for practising his esoteric art.

*Mahālaxmī*— A goddess. The worship of the goddess on the 8th day of Āshwin.

*Malhar koḷi*— A hill-tribe of North Sahyadri.

*Malkhāmb*—A smooth wooden post tapering upwards on which various holds of wrestling are practised.

*Maḷyā*— A kind of fish.

*Mandap*— A pendal.

*Mangalāgour*— The festival observed on Shrāvaṇ Tuesdays.

*Mantra*— A sacred hymn.

*Mantrajāgar*— The chanting of *mantras* by learned Brahmins specially invited for the purpose.

*Māth*— A vegetable.

*Meḷā*— A group giving performances specially during the Ganapati festival.

*Modak*— A sweetmeat of which the god Ganapati is believed to be very fond.

*Mṛidang*— A drum of a superior type.

*Nāch*— A dance.

*Nāglī*— A kind of corn.

*Nāgpanchamī*— The fifth day of Shrāvaṇ on which the cobra is worshipped.

*Naktā*— A *Shimgā* dance. One of the actors in the dance.

*Nanda*— A milkman.

*Naraka chaturdashī*— Second day of *Divāḷī* festival.

*Nāraḷ*— A coconut.

*Nāraḷī-pourṇimā*— The fifteenth day of Shrāvaṇ.

*Navas*— A vow.

*Nīm*— A kind of tree.

*Pāḍvā*— The first day of a month. The Hindu new year's day.

*Pālkhī*— A palanquin.

*Pān*— A betel-leaf.

*Panch*— The persons selected to settle a dispute.

*Pānzok*— An instrument used by a *bhagat*.

*Parīṭ*— A washerman.

*Pāsōḍyā*— A physical activity on the *Mangalāgour* day.

*Pāṭalyā*— An ornament put on the wrists by women.

*Pātharvat*— A stone-cutter.

*Pāṭīl*— The village headman.

*Pinda*— An offering made to the manes.

*Pītāmbar*— A costly silk garment generally of yellow colour, and used as a substitute for dhoti on sacred occasions.

*Phad*— A wrestling tournament.

*Poute*— A *jānve*-like thread worn on the *Nārali Pournimā* day.

*Povādā*— A ballad.

*Prasād*— Things that are distributed after being offered to God.

*Pūjā*— Worship.

*Purāna*— Reading and explaining of the sacred books known as *Purānas*, generally in a temple.

*Purānik*— One who reads and explains the *Purānas*.

*Rāga*— A pattern of melody with a well-defined mood and a model scale in which every note has its individual place as the starter, the predominant, the centre and the final.

*Rākhī*— Sacred silk thread worn round the wrist,

*Rukhvat*— The eatables taken by the bride's party to the bride-groom, immediately before the marriage ceremony.

*Sādetīn muhūrt*— Three full and one half day in a year, believed to be auspicious by Hindus namely, *Varshapratipadā*, *Vijayādashamī*, *Balipratipadā* and *Akshyyatritiyā* (half).

*Sanaī*— A musical instrument.

*Sankāsūr*— A dancer wearing the mask of the demon Shankha.

*Sāphā*— A long piece of cloth used as a turban.

*Sārvajanik*— Public.

*Sarvapitrī*— The last day of Bhādrapada.

*Sāvkār*— A money-lender; a land-lord.

*Shāstrī*— One well-versed in the sacred books.

*Sherne*— A coconut and a rupee and a quarter buried secretly in ground for the Palanquin-dancers to find out.

*Shidhā*— Uncooked food offered to a Brahmin priest.

*Shidhorī*— Cooked food given to one undertaking a long journey.

*Shimgā*— The last festival of the Hindu year.
*Shyāṇṇav kuḷī*— The 96 families of the Marathas, forming the nobility.
*Sīmollanghan*— Crossing the boundary of a village.
*Sonār*— A goldsmith.
*Sūp*— A winowing pan.
*Sutār*— A carpenter.
*Sūtradhār*— One who introduces the different characters in the *Dashāvatārs*.
*Tablā*— A musical instrument.
*Ṭāḷ*— A musical instrument.
*Tamāshā*— The folk-opera of Maharashtra.
*Tamāsgīr*— One of the group who performs a *tamāshā*.
*Tamburī*— A musical instrument.
*Ṭārapī*— A musical instrument.
*Telī*— An oilman.
*Terḍā*— A kind of plant.
*Ṭhakūr*—A hill-tribe of North Sahyadri.
*Ṭīmkī*— A musical instrument.
*Ṭiprī*— Sticks used in a dance. A dance in which small the name of a dance sticks serve as musical accompaniment.
*Tripurī pourṇimā*— The fifteenth day of Kārtik.
*Tuntuṇe*— A musical instrument.
*Ukhāṇā*— A rhymed couplet expressing some sentiment.
*Umbar*— The glomerous fig tree.
*Vāḍī*— Food offered to the manes on the *sarvapitrī* day.
*Vāhan*— A carrier.
*Vahīpūjan*— The worship of account-books.
*Varāt*— The procession of the bride and the bridegroom after the marriage ceremony.
*Vārī*— A visit to Pandharpur or Alandi on the traditionally fixed holidays.
*Vari ghālaṇe*— The funeral dance of the Bhils.
*Vārkarī*— One who has taken the vow of a *vārī*.
*Varṣhapratipadā*— The Hindu new year's day.
*Vasoḷyā*— The women worshippers of *Mangaḷāgour* or *Haritālikā*.
*Veḷā*— An armlet.

*Vighnahartā*— One of the names of Ganapati.
*Vijayādashmī*— The tenth day of Ashwin.
*Vīṇā*— A musical instrument.
*Virale*— A portable contrivance made of a bamboo frame and covered with leaves to keep off rain.
*Wāgh*— A tiger.
*Wāḍī*— A hamlet.
*Wāmandvādashī*— The twelvth day of the bright half of Bhādrapad.
*Wārlī*— A backward tribe of the Thana district.
*Zamindār*— A landlord.
*Zeṇḍā*— The dance competition of the Katkaris and the Thakurs.
*Zimmā*— The name of a dance.

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## INDEX

PLATE NO. 1

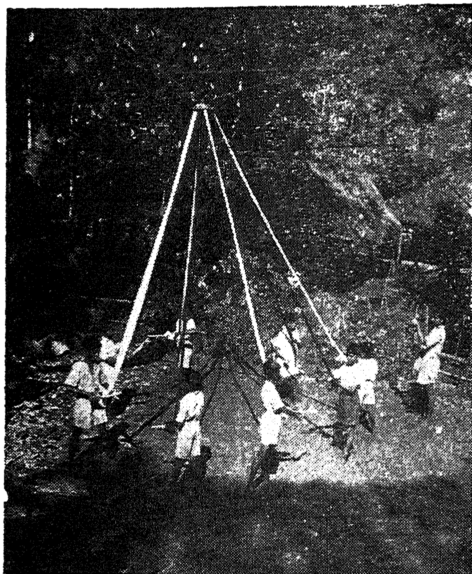


1. *Dinḍī* dance— Front view.

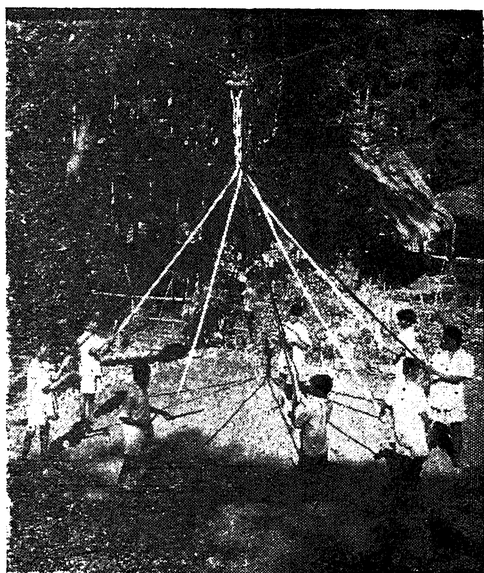


2. *Dinḍī* dance— Back view.
( Mark the tricolour flag.)

PLATE NO. 2



3. *Goph* dance— Starting position.



4. *Goph* dance— *Goph* in progress.

PLATE NO. 3

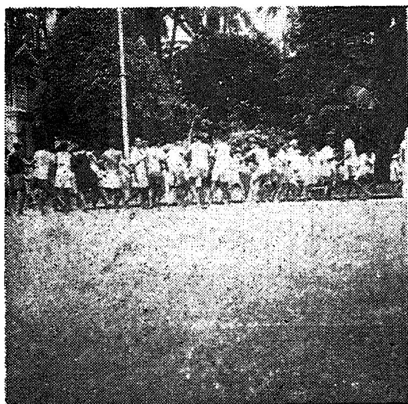


5. *Goph* dance—*Goph* nearing completion.

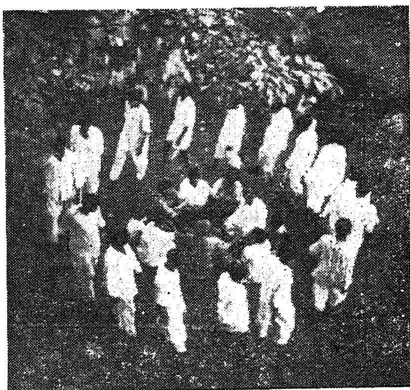


6. *Kalā* dance— Breaking the *handī*.

PLATE NO. 4



7. *Govindā* dance.

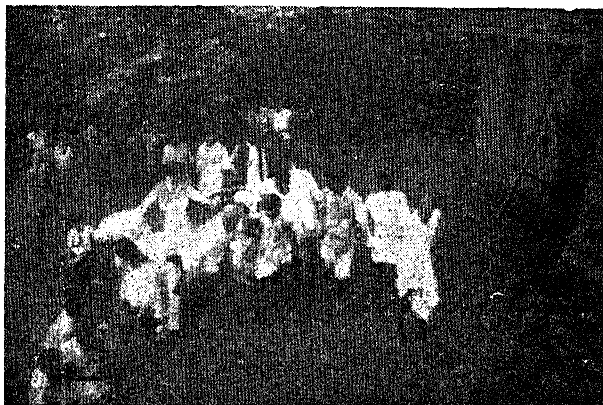


8. *Gour* dance of the Konkan farmers.



9. *Gour* dance of the Konkan farmers.

PLATE NO. 5

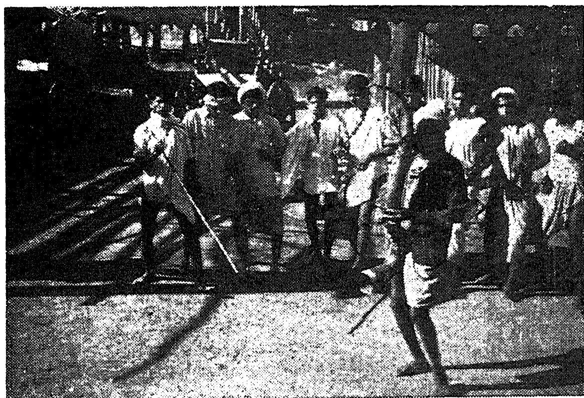


10. *Gour* dance— *Bhilkavḍā*.



11. *Ṭārapī* dance of the Thakurs, Warlis and Malhar Kolis.

PLATE NO. 6



12. *Ṭārapī* dance— *Uḍakyāchā*.



13. *Ṭārapī* dance— *Ḍhopāphoḍyā*.

PLATE NO 7

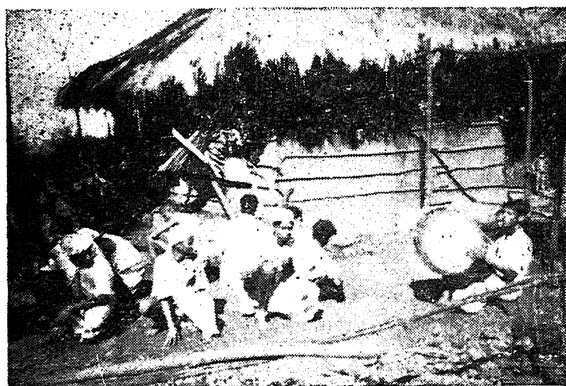


14. *Ṭārapī* dance— *Bhuī phugaḍī*.

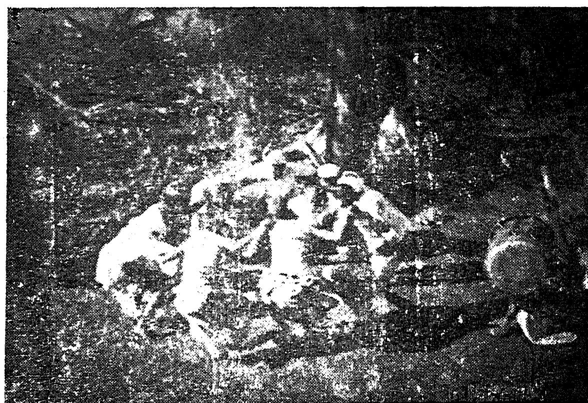


15. *Ḍhol* dance of the Ma Thakurs.

PLATE NO. 8



16. *Ḍhol* dance of the Ma Thakurs.



17. *Ḍhol* dance of the Ma Thakurs.



18. *Kāmbḍyā* dance of the Malhar Kolis.



19. *Gherāchā nāch* of the Bhils.



20. *Rathāchā nāch* of the Bhils,

PLATE NO 10.

Shimga dances of the Konkan Kunbis.



21. The *nakṭā* dance.




22. *Kāṭkheḷ* dance— Starting position.

PLATE NO. 11

Shimga dance of the Konkan Kunbis.



23. *Kāṭkheḷ* dance— *Dāvaṇ.*



24. *Koḷyāchā nāch.*

PLATE NO. 12

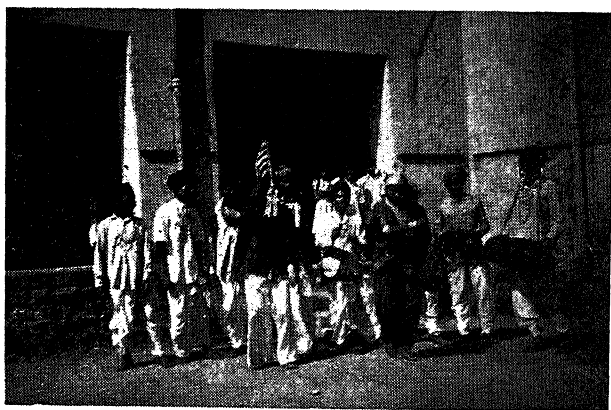
Shimga dances of the Konkan Kunbis.



25. *Ḍerā* dance.



26. The *Sankāsūr*.



27 *Rādhā* dance with *Sankāsūr*.

PLATE NO. 13

Sh imga dances of the Konkan Kunbis.



28. *Rādhā* dance withot.t *Sankāsūr*.



29. *Rādhā* ćance with two *Rādhās*.

PLATE NO. 14

Shimga dance of the Konkan Kunbis.



30. *Rādhā* dance with two *Rādhās*.



31. *Rādhā* dance with two *Rādhās*.



32. The *pālakhī*.

PLATE NO. 15



33. Bhil dance— Men led by 'women.'

Left to right :

(Top) 1. Tiger. 2. Shankar.
3. Tiger.

(Middle) 1. *Naṭuā* (jester).
2. Ganapati.
3. *Trāṭikā*.

(Bottom) 1. Horse.
2. Cow.



34. *Dashāvatār* masks used in Ratnagiri district.

PLATE NO. 16




35. *Dashāvatār* masks used in Ratnagiri district.

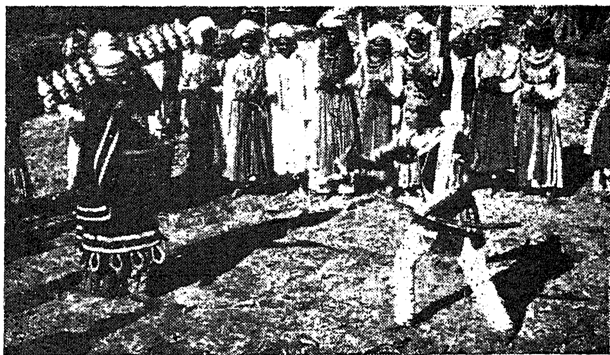
Left to right ;

(Top) 1. Ravan, the ten-headed demon.

(Middle) 1. Ram. 2. Lakshman

(Bottom) 1. *Harangabhāvo* ( a fop ), 2. *Raṇapuṭaḷī* (Goddess of war). 3, *Gajaragājaram.* *

*This mask is used by Rama when fighting with Ravan.



36. Ram—Ravan fight in a *Dashāvatār* performance from Ratnagiri district.

PLATE NO. 17



37. *Lezim.*



38. *Lezim.*

PLATE NO. 18

Kaḍak Laxmi.



39. Starting position.



40. The goddess not responding to prayers, the devotee decides to chastise himself and proceeds to whip his own person.

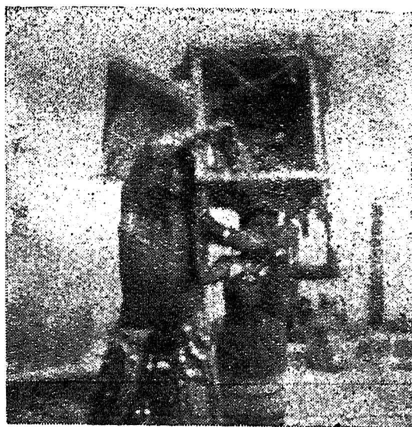


41. Whipping is not enough. The Goddess is still obdurate. The devotee prepares to offer his blood.



42. He pierces his biceps for the purpose.

Kaḍak Laxmi.



43. The goddess is at last appeased and the devotee approaches her and takes *pinjar* from near the deity (for applying to the forehead of those present).



44. Funeral dance of the Bhil.

PLATE NO. 20





45 & 46. A Kumbhar priest dancing at the obsequies.



47. *Tarangas* or *devas* of South Ratnagiri.

PLATE NO. 21

*Mangalāgour* dances.



48. *Phugaḍī*— Starting position.



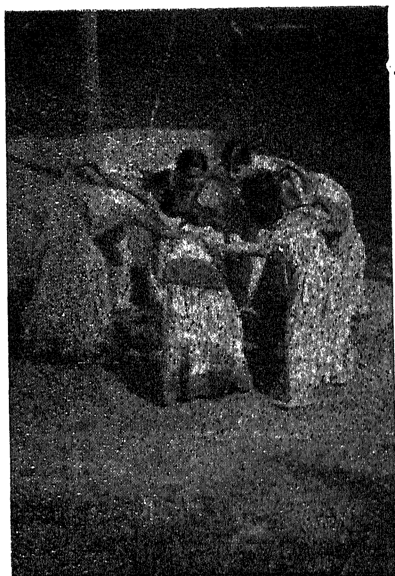
49. *Phugaḍī*– In action.

PLATE NO. 22

*Mangalāgour* dances.



50. Group *phugaḍī*.



51. *Bhovar bheṇḍī*.

*Mangalāgour* dances,



52. *Nāch go ghumā.*



53. *Kombaḍā.*

PLATE NO. 24

*Mangalāgour* dances.



54. *Ṭiprī.*

*Gour* dances of Kunbi women.



55. *Chuṭkīchā nāch.*

PLATE NO. 25

*Gour* dances of Kunbi women.



56. *Zimmā*



57. The dance of Ma Thakur women.



58. The dance of Ma-Thakur women.



59. Mixed dance of the Malhar Kolis.



60. Mixed dance of the Malhar Kolis.

to right:
)) 1. Ganapati.
2. *Trāṭikā.*
3. *Varāha.*
ldle) 1. Narasinha.
2. *Naṭavā.*
3. Tiger.
4. Devi.
:om) 1. Demon.
2. *Mahisha.*
3. *Matsya.*



61. *Dashāvatār* masks on the Ghatside.

PLATE NO. 28

*Dashāvatār* masks used on the Ghatside.



62. The horse-mask.



63. 'Narasinha' fully clad and ready for the *Dashāvātār* performance.



64. *Vīṇā*.



65. *Mridang*.

PLATE NO 30

# Musical Instruments.



66. *Tablā*.



67. *Daph*.

PLATE NO. 31

## Musical Instruments.



68. *Dholki*.



69. *Tuntune*.

PLATE NO. 32

Musical Instruments.



70. *Samel*,



71. *Ḍholkī* used by *Kaḍak Laxmī*.



72. *Khālū*.

PLATE NO. 33

Musical Instruments.



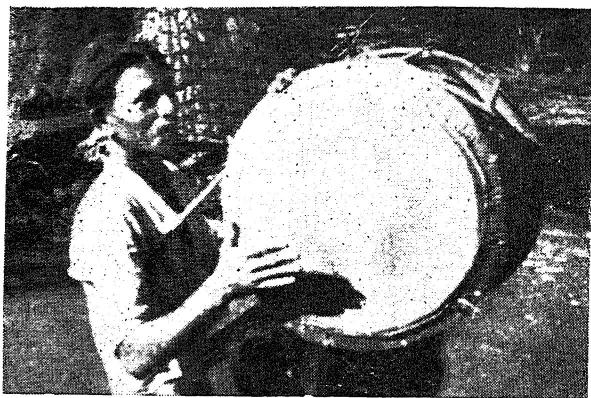
73. *Ḍholkī* used by the Kumbhār.



74. *Ḍhol* of the Bhil.

PLATE NO. 34

## Musical Instruments



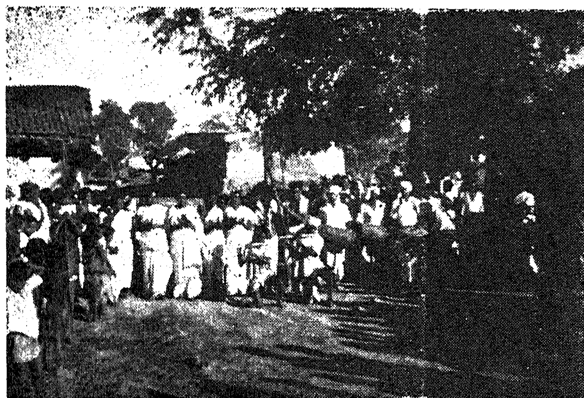
75. *Ḍhol* of the Thakur and the Katkari.



76. *Ṭārapī*.

PLATE NO. 35

77 & 78. Dances of the Santals.



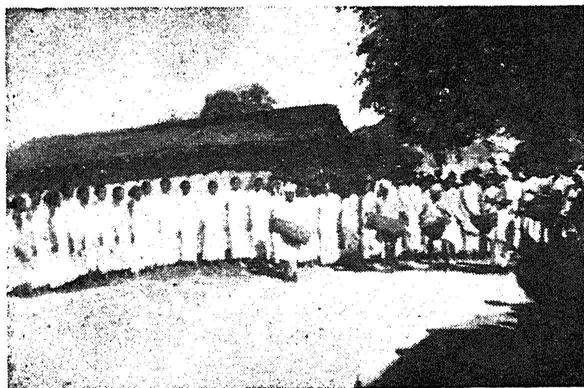
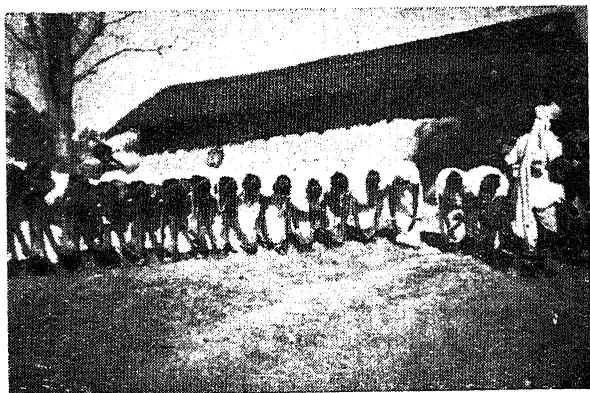


**PLATE NO. 36**

79 & 80. Dances of the Santals.





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